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# AMERICAN LITERATURE

FOR

SECONDARY SCHOOLS

BY

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ASSISTANT PROFESSOR OF AMERICAN LITERATURE  
IN THE UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN

New York

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1914

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## PREFACE

TEACHERS of English are fairly well agreed that most of the time spent in literary study should be devoted to literature itself, rather than to history, biography, or second-hand criticism. Yet many, and it seems to me an increasing number, feel that the student needs a brief general survey to aid him in grouping and correlating scattered facts, and to show things in their right proportions. This is especially true in American literature, where, if anywhere, the American student should correlate literary history with other history, and should see that American authors reflect in their writings national life.

This book is intended primarily for use in secondary schools where such a survey is offered in the third or fourth year of the course. It gives relatively few dates or unessential biographical facts, and only a moderate amount of formal criticism; but it aims to show the continuous growth and development of American literature, to point out its connection with the American history which the student already knows, and to discuss in their proper relationships those authors with whom an American might reasonably be supposed to have an acquaintance.

A single brief term would be sufficient to study the essential parts of the text, and to illustrate them by reference to writings which the pupil has already read. The work will be far more profitable and more interesting, however, if the history can be enforced by a considerable amount of reading in the literature itself. The lists of

readings and topics should furnish ample material for such an extension and enrichment of the course.

These lists of readings and topics have been submitted to several successful teachers of English in secondary schools. Among those to whom I am especially indebted for hints, additions, and advice, are my colleague, Professor H. K. Bassett; Mr. Merle M. Hoover, of the William L. Dickinson High School, Jersey City; and my former pupils at Wisconsin or Columbia, Miss May V. Dunn, Miss Gertrude Ross, Miss J. W. Rutland, and Miss Leslie Spence. These persons must be credited with many of the happiest suggestions in the lists, but they are in no way responsible for the limitations and defects. While the chronological tables in the appendix have been compiled from various sources, it would be unfair not to acknowledge my indebtedness to Whitcomb's *Chronological Outlines of American Literature*.

For permission to reproduce interesting illustrations I would extend my thanks to Harper & Brothers, Dodd Mead & Company, and Mr. W. E. Benjamin.

W. B. C.

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN,  
July, 1914.

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# AMERICAN LITERATURE FOR SECONDARY SCHOOLS

## INTRODUCTION

**Purpose of this Study.** — The following chapters are intended to present a brief outline of American literature, and to show how this literature is an expression of American life. Every student, before he takes up this book, will have become acquainted with many of the better American writings, and will probably have learned some facts regarding their authors. It is the aim of the present study to show the mutual relations of the men and the works that he already knows, to introduce him to others, and to give him a view of American literature as a continuous development, closely connected with the development of the social and political life of the nation.

**Periods of American Literature.** — For convenience, the history of American literature will be divided into five periods:

The first, or Colonial period, extends from 1607, when the earliest permanent English settlement was founded at Jamestown, to 1765, when the stamp act and other causes of political disagreement began to alienate the colonists from the mother country.

The second, or Revolutionary period, from 1765 to 1800, covers the time in which the American people were becoming independent both in government and in spirit.

The third period, from 1800 to 1833, was a time of many experiments in American letters, and produced, in New York,

the first group of American writers who won general recognition abroad.<sup>1</sup>

The fourth period, from 1833 to 1883, was marked by the advent, especially in New England, of a considerable number of distinguished writers,<sup>2</sup> many of whom were concerned with the great moral and social questions that were agitating the country, while others, both in New England and elsewhere, wrote with a more distinctly æsthetic purpose.

The fifth period, from 1883 to the present, is too close at hand to make critical estimates safe. It represents the new spirit that has arisen since the unification of the nation after the Civil War.

This division is warranted by the fact that each period is distinguished by characteristics and tendencies of its own. A national literature is, however, a complex and a continuous development, and movements and tendencies never have abrupt beginnings or endings. The dates given above are convenient halting places in the study of American literary history, but no one of them marks an abrupt change in the literature itself.

In connection with each of these periods the student should recall all that he has learned from other sources regarding English history, English literature, and American history during the same years. He should continually use the chronological tables in the appendix to freshen his recollection of earlier studies, and to remind him of the relative position of writers and historical events.

<sup>1</sup> Irving, Cooper, Bryant, and others.

<sup>2</sup> In New England, Emerson, Hawthorne, Longfellow, Whittier, Holmes, Lowell, and others; in other sections of the country, Poe, Whitman, and others.

## CHAPTER I

### THE COLONIAL PERIOD

1607-1765

**General Chronology.** — The Colonial period of American literature covers most of the seventeenth and the first two thirds of the eighteenth centuries — a period considerably longer than that from the Declaration of Independence to the present. This period is naturally divided into two unequal subperiods. In the earlier of these the writings produced in America were almost wholly the work of men who had been born and educated in England and who had emigrated to the colonies; in the later, American writers were most of them born, and the great majority of them educated, in the New World. The year 1676 is often chosen, arbitrarily of course, to mark the division between these two subperiods.

During the greater part of the colonial time there were two distinct groups of American writers, one in the South, the other in New England. In the later years of the period a third group appeared in the Middle colonies, particularly Pennsylvania. Since these groups had little relation with one another it seems best to treat each separately. This chapter will, therefore, consider first the writings in the Southern colonies, then those in New England, and lastly those in the Middle colonies. The student should take especial pains to note the relative chronological positions of writers in the three different sections of the country.

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##### SOUTHERN COLONIAL WRITINGS, 1607-1676

**Characteristics of the Southern Colonists.** — The first writings that can reasonably be included in a discussion of American literature <sup>1</sup> were produced by the Englishmen who founded the Jamestown colony in 1607. These men differed widely in wealth, social position, education, and morals, but



Jamestown in 1622.

they agreed in holding the view of life that was characteristic of the Elizabethan time. In the later years of Elizabeth and the early years of James, Englishmen felt as never before a sense of nationality and at the same time a sense of the

<sup>1</sup> It is hardly worth while to quibble over the question whether some of these earliest writings are "American" or not. We should not include among American authors an Englishman of a later date who resided in the country but a few years as did Smith, Strachey, and Sandys. With these earlier colonists, however, the case seems somewhat different. American literature was an offshoot from English literature; and at the very beginning some writings may be considered as belonging to either the branch or the parent stock, or to both.



worth and importance of the individual. Under the spur of these ideas they achieved great results in commerce, exploration, and colonization, and especially in literature. All this is suggested by the names of Drake and Raleigh, of Shakespeare, Spenser, Marlowe, Jonson, and many other men of action and men of letters who were contemporaries or immediate predecessors of the first settlers in Virginia. An American may feel a certain pride that his national literature was an offshoot of English literature at this auspicious time, even though he finds that Shakespeare and his greater contemporaries exerted little direct influence on early American writings. The Elizabethan writers of London are valued most for their work in poetry and the drama. The colonists and explorers who were founding a new settlement thousands of miles from other white men had little time or inclination for these finished forms of composition. When they wrote it was in prose, to report their adventures, or to describe their new surroundings and the strange people among whom they had come. For this reason, if for no other, there is little similarity in form between their writings and those of their better known English contemporaries. Yet a careful study will show that there was often great similarity in spirit and outlook on life.

**Some Representative Writers.** — A few early Virginian writers should be remembered, not as authors of great works, but as examples and types of the Elizabethan English-American. First among these is the famous CAPTAIN JOHN SMITH. Smith was but twenty-six or twenty-seven years old when he came to Jamestown, in 1607, yet he was much older in experience than most men of sixty.<sup>1</sup> Though bluff

<sup>1</sup> According to statements in Smith's *Autobiography*, written late in life, his father died when he was a boy, and he deserted a merchant to whom he was apprenticed and ran away to find his fortune.

## 6 AMERICAN LITERATURE FOR SECONDARY SCHOOLS

and quarrelsome he was probably the most capable of the new colonists. During his stay of three years he took a prominent part in the government, superintended the fortification of Jamestown, explored the surrounding country, and traded and made treaties with the Indians. It is hard to see how he found time for writing; but he sent back to England in the early summer of 1608 an historical and descriptive manuscript which was published in England as *A True Relation of Virginia*,<sup>1</sup> and which has the distinction of being the first book written in the English language in America. A little

He tells of service as a soldier in the Low Countries and France, of enforced membership in a pirate crew in the Mediterranean, and of still more marvelous adventures in the Far East, where he fought against the Turks. Possibly Smith drew on his imagination for some details of the narrative which is our only record of these early exploits, but it is certain that when he came to America, he was a man of vigor, resourcefulness, and experience. Most of his account of happenings in Virginia may be verified by reference to the writings of others, but there has been much rather profitless discussion of the well-known story of his rescue by Pocahontas. When Smith made the expedition on which the rescue must have taken place, if it took place at all, Pocahontas was a small child; and in the *True Relation*, written immediately afterward, he says nothing of the incident. Later, when Pocahontas had married an Englishman and was a social favorite in London, he gave out the story. It seems likely that he invented the tale to pay a compliment to Pocahontas and to link his own name with that of a social celebrity; but it is possible that the rescue really occurred, and that for some unknown reason Smith omitted it from the *True Relation*.

<sup>1</sup> This title, like many others cited in the early part of this history, is an abbreviation. It was the custom of the time to make the title-page fully descriptive of a book and its contents. Smith's work was published as "A True Relation of such occurrences and accidents of noate as hath hapned in Virginia since the first planting of that Collony, which is now resident in the South part thereof, till the last returne from thence." For full titles of other books referred to in this chapter see the author's *History of American Literature*, Tyler's *History of American Literature during the Colonial Time*, etc.



Frontispiece to Smith's *Map of New England* with portrait of John Smith.

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later he completed and sent back a description of the country and its inhabitants which was published as *A Map of Virginia*.

After his return to England in 1609 Smith made a voyage of exploration to the coast northward of Cape Cod, and later attempted to found a colony in New England. His expedition was captured by French pirates, and after his release he lived quietly in England until his death in 1631. In these



John Smith held captive by the Indians. A picture from an early American school reader.

later years he wrote much about America and about colonization in general, and he compiled *The General Historie of Virginia*. The only works which he is known to have written in America are, however, *The True Relation*, the *Map of Virginia*, and a long outspoken letter of complaint and protest addressed to the proprietors of the colony. These writings are what might be expected from an untrained but forceful Elizabethan Englishman. The author had no time to think of literary graces, but he had something to say, and he said it with the same directness with

which he built a fort or fought out a quarrel. Almost every line violates some of the rhetorical rules that are recognized to-day; and even in his own time, when English prose was far less highly developed than English poetry, his style must have seemed crude and formless. Still, there are few sentences that are not perfectly clear and to the point. Some of Smith's later works, produced at leisure and after he had more experience in writing, show more finish.

Another sort of Virginian is represented by WILLIAM STRACHEY, who was appointed secretary of the colony at the same time Sir Thomas Gates was named as governor in 1610. The two officials were fellow-passengers on a vessel that suffered shipwreck on the Bermudas, and they endured many hardships before they finally reached Jamestown. Strachey's only work of importance is an account of this experience known as *The Wrack and Redemption of Sir Thomas Gates*. Strachey was not a practiced writer, but he was evidently a man of better education and greater acquaintance with books than Smith. The *Wrack and Redemption* is a studied and somewhat self-conscious attempt<sup>1</sup> to describe impressive natural phenomena and to tell of terrible experiences. Our interest in the work is increased by the fact that some scholars believe Shakespeare to have had it in mind when he described the storm in the "Tempest."

Still another Englishman who came to Virginia for a time

<sup>1</sup> Quotations from the Latin poets, references to the narratives of other travelers, and formally wrought sentences all show that the author was striving for what he considered proper literary impressiveness. A man who wrote naturally — Smith, for example — would have used none of these artificial devices in telling of a shipwreck in which he had himself suffered; and a man of more literary training would have known that they were doubtful expedients for gaining force. Still, there is a certain effectiveness in Strachey's story.

## 10 *AMERICAN LITERATURE FOR SECONDARY SCHOOLS*

was **GEORGE SANDYS**, who was made treasurer of the colony in 1621. Sandys was a poet whose name still holds a place in histories of English literature, and his office was probably bestowed as a reward for his literary achievement. While in America, he completed a translation of Ovid which he had begun in England. There is, of course, nothing distinctively American in the work; and Sandys should be remembered only as a reminder of the fact that men of recognized literary ability were at times temporary residents of the colonies.

**Types of Southern Writers.** — Smith, Strachey, and Sandys typify three classes of writers — the blunt adventurer who wrote with no thought of form, the gentleman who felt obliged by his position to attempt literary production, and the accomplished man of letters who held a temporary appointment in the colony. Most of the other early writers in the South belonged to one of these three classes. Those like Smith were the most numerous. At first all England was curious regarding the New World and its people, and almost every emigrant who could write sent back in private letters, if not for publication, accounts of his experiences, and descriptions of what he saw. This process was repeated as each of the Southern colonies was founded. Other early writings were as meritorious as those of Smith and Strachey; but since types and not individuals are important, it is not necessary to consider them here.

### SOUTHERN COLONIAL WRITINGS, 1676-1765

**Characteristics of the Later Southern Colonists.** — After the earliest years of the Jamestown colony, Southerners wrote less than might be expected from their numbers and their importance in American affairs. This was due in part to the general lack of education. Both the character of the

settlers and the nature of the country, in which navigable rivers constituted ready-made highways, tended to encourage the feudal ideal of large estates. The planters lived so far apart that they could not send their children to common schools, and it was difficult, often impossible, to secure private tutors. Moreover, the Southerner was usually satisfied with the existing condition of affairs in church and state, and did not, like the New Englander, feel that education was necessary to the preservation of his liberties. Some, at least, of the royal governors quietly discouraged education, in the belief that a people who did not read were more easily governed. While there were always some Southern gentlemen who had been trained in English schools and universities, there were many others of wealth and recognized social position who were almost wholly ignorant of books. Schools were few, and there was little or no opportunity for printing. Even Southerners of literary tastes felt, as did some of their English contemporaries, that literature might be the recreation, but never the business, of a gentleman. When they wrote, they did so in an amateurish fashion, and instead of publishing their writings, kept them in manuscript to be shown to their friends and handed down to their children.<sup>1</sup>

As might be expected under such circumstances, later Southern writings were very provincial. The Southern far more than the Northern colonists looked to England for authority in all things. Those who could afford to do so imported most articles of furniture and of dress, and of course imported such books as they read. Those who were sent abroad for education went to England. It was natural that there should be no school of Southern authors, but that such

<sup>1</sup> Compare the feeling of the sportsman who will eat his game, or present it to his friends, but who will under no circumstances sell it.

scattered writings as were produced should follow the latest literary fashion that had been imported from the mother country. This tendency may be illustrated by reference to two or three representative works.

**Later Southern Writings.**— Bacon's Rebellion, the civil war in Virginia in 1675–1676, just at the close of the first period, led to the composition of the *Burwell Papers*. These papers, which were found long afterward among the archives of an old Virginia family, were evidently written soon after the events they relate, by some Virginian who concealed his name to insure his personal safety. They tell of the insurrection, and contain two poems, one eulogizing, the other condemning, Bacon, the leader who opposed the governor. The matter is interesting, but the narrative is in the artificial and prolix style that characterized English prose just after the Restoration. The verse, too, is in the rhymed pentameter couplet which had recently come into favor in England.

Some thirty years later, in 1708, there was published in London a humorous poem entitled *The Sot-Weed Factor, or a Voyage to Maryland, by Eben. Cook, Gent.* This poem, which has more fame than real importance, is a satirical account of the adventures of a "factor" or agent who tried to barter for "sot-weed" or tobacco in Maryland. It is significant that it is written in the octosyllabic couplet which, since the appearance of Butler's *Hudibras*,<sup>1</sup> had been the accepted form for burlesque verse in England.

<sup>1</sup> The characteristics of this satire on the English Puritans, written by Samuel Butler between 1663 and 1678, are rather free and even coarse ridicule, expressed in a peculiar jiggling eight-syllable verse, and marked and sometimes ludicrous rhymes. It is now relatively little read, but was a favorite model for satire, especially political satire, in England and America for over a century, and will be frequently referred to in this history.



More important than either of the works just mentioned are the writings of WILLIAM BYRD. Byrd was the head of a wealthy and influential Virginia family, and a representative of the best type of man that the South produced during the early eighteenth century. He had been educated in England, and he collected a considerable library. His writings, which were not printed in his lifetime, but were carefully engrossed on parchment for transmission to his descendants, are sometimes called the *Westover Manuscripts*, from the name of his family estate. They include papers on various subjects, the most notable being the "History of the Dividing Line." This tells of the author's experiences as one of the commissioners who, in 1728, settled the disputed boundary between Virginia and North Carolina, and



William Byrd.

gives interesting, intelligent, and often humorous descriptions of the wild country through which the survey ran. It is pleasant reading even to-day, and though it has been somewhat overpraised, is one of the best pieces of writing done during the colonial time. A gentleman of Byrd's training was, of course, well read in the writings of Addison, Steele, and other English essayists of the early eighteenth century, and his style is evidently modeled on theirs.

The *Burwell Papers*, the *Sot-Weed Factor*, and the works

of Byrd were written, speaking very roughly, at intervals of about thirty years, and each follows the latest fashion in English literature. Other Southern writers of the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries show the same imitative tendency. Several of them produced writings of importance to the special student. Indeed, Southern colonial literature is in itself quite as interesting, and has at least as much literary merit, as that of the North. It has, however, no organic unity and it exerted far less influence on later American men of letters than did the writings produced in New England. For this reason it may be more hurriedly dismissed by the general reader.

#### NEW ENGLAND COLONIAL WRITINGS, 1620-1676

**Characteristics of the New England Colonists.** — It is in no spirit of unpatriotic sectionalism that the student of American history remarks the differences which from the first existed between the North and the South. The student of American literature, in particular, must observe that the Englishmen who came to Plymouth in 1620 and to Massachusetts Bay in 1630 differed widely from those who in 1607 had come to Jamestown. The early immigrants to the South were actuated chiefly by a love of adventure and a desire for gain, and many of them, probably most of them, hoped to return to England after they had made their fortunes. The Pilgrims and the Puritans, though by no means indifferent to worldly affairs, came for the purpose of establishing, according to their own ideas, a permanent home for themselves and their descendants. Still more important than this difference in purpose was the underlying difference in temper and view of life. The founders of Virginia were representative of that hearty, energetic, pleasure-loving England that

produced, as its greatest literary achievement, the Elizabethan drama. The Puritans<sup>1</sup> looked upon this world only as a preparation for eternal life, and regarded most recreations as sin, or as temptations to sin.<sup>2</sup> Such men not only failed to sympathize with the thoughts and writings of the representative Elizabethans, but they condemned such thoughts and writings as evil. It is hard to realize that two



Pilgrims landing from the *Mayflower*. A picture from an early American geography.

groups of Englishmen who were so nearly contemporaries could differ so widely as did these early colonists of the North and the South.

Most of the good and the bad characteristics of New England colonial literature can be traced to the characteristics

<sup>1</sup> Throughout this discussion the word "Puritans" will often be used to include both Puritans and Pilgrims.

<sup>2</sup> There is a certain truth in Macaulay's unfair remark that the Puritans hated bear-baiting not because it gave pain to the bear, but because it gave pleasure to the spectators. It was not that the Puritan disliked to see people happy; but he suspected nearly everything that gave happiness of being some wile of the Devil to distract the Christian's thoughts from his soul's salvation.

of these early settlers. Earnestness, cleanness, soundness of moral judgment, and regard for truth were due to the more admirable traits of the authors; on the other hand the artistic limitations in both kind and quality of writing came from the peculiar narrowness of the Puritans. Since these men rejected as dangerous the works of the greater Elizabethan poets and dramatists, their reading was mainly in the preachers and pamphleteers who supported their peculiar beliefs; and from these unfortunate models they derived their literary style. True, they were constant students of



Schoolhouse at Dedham, Massachusetts; built in 1649.

of the *Bible*, and some of the better qualities of New England prose can be traced to the influence of the noble King James version; but their reverence for the sacredness of the scripture was so great that they seem to have been strangely oblivious to its literary beauties.

The Puritans were the champions of a theological system that was continually assailed, and they felt that their children must be educated in order to defend their faith. They established public schools in every community. They founded Harvard College when the colony of Massachusetts Bay was but six years old. They set up a printing press soon afterward. Every one not only could read but did read; and a considerable number of colonists tried their hands at such forms of writing as the law and public sentiment permitted.

**The Early Historians.** — The first form of writing in any new settlement is history, or that which furnishes the basis for history. Ordinarily this takes the form, as it did in Virginia, of personal narratives of experiences, written for the most part to satisfy the curiosity of readers in the mother country. The New Englander believed, however, that he was founding a great commonwealth under the direct guidance of God, and men of weight in the community felt it their duty to leave a careful record for posterity. Thus, WILLIAM BRADFORD, governor of Plymouth, wrote a *History of Plymouth Plantation*, mostly in the form of annals, that traces the rise of the dissenters in England, their experiences in Holland, and their coming to America in the *Mayflower*, and continues the history of the settlement from 1620 to 1647. JOHN WINTHROP, the first governor of the colony of Massachusetts Bay, kept a detailed journal from 1630 to 1649, since published as *The History of New England*. Neither of these writers gave his work to the public in his lifetime, not because of any false ideas of the dignity of authorship, but because he was writing for later readers who would gladly know every act of their forefathers.<sup>1</sup>

Neither Bradford's nor Winthrop's history is great as literature. Both men are likely to be at their best in calm passages where they catch something of the dignity of scriptural prose. Winthrop had the better education and the broader experience of life, but the diary form which he employed

<sup>1</sup> Bradford's manuscript had an interesting history. It descended through various hands until the Revolution, when it disappeared during the British occupation of Boston, and was given up by scholars as lost. In 1855 it was discovered in the library of the Bishop of London, and in 1897 it was restored, with appropriate ceremonies on both sides of the Atlantic, to the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. It was first printed in 1856, almost two hundred years after the author's death.

gave little chance for effective writing. In the works of both men the modern reader is interested in the contemporary accounts of important historical events, and even more, perhaps, in the mention of trivial happenings that help to portray the daily life of the people. The sufferings of the



John Winthrop.

colonists, the makeshift arrangements by which they first met the need for shelter and food, their adventures, serious and ludicrous, with Indians and wild animals, their experiences in farming and stock-raising, even their unedifying church and neighborhood quarrels — all may be learned from these histories, and the

knowledge helps to a better understanding of the kind of men our ancestors really were. Especially valuable to the student are passages that show religious faith and the implicitness of the belief that every occurrence, however small, reveals in a direct way the hand of God.

There were many other historical writers in early New England, some of whom published their works at once, either

at home or in the mother country, but Bradford and Winthrop may serve as representatives of all.

For the sake of contrast, mention should be made of THOMAS MORTON, who for a time maintained a trading post at Merry Mount, near Plymouth. Morton was a churchman and a loyalist, a rollicking, irreverent individual who had only ridicule and contempt for his straight-laced neighbors, and who annoyed them in many ways. In retaliation they arrested him and sent him to England, where he was speedily released. Before he returned to renew his quarrel at close quarters he wrote the *New English Canaan*, an historical and descriptive account of New England which puts the Puritans in a bad light. Morton was prejudiced and untrustworthy, but his lively book forms a diverting contrast to the plodding writings of his neighbors, and incidentally shows how the fathers of New England appeared to their contemporaries who did not like them.<sup>1</sup>

**Religious Writings.** — Even more representative of New England than historical writings were those on religious and theological subjects. The first New Englanders, though

<sup>1</sup> Morton had a cheap but clever humor which he exercised at the expense of the Puritans. He continually referred to the worthy but diminutive Miles Standish as "Captain Shrimp," and he had equally disrespectful nicknames for other dignitaries of the colony. He was fond of anecdotes like that of the guest who fell to and ate the best part of the feast while his host, with closed eyes, was saying a long New England grace. It was Morton, too, who originated the old story that when an active young man had killed an Indian, the Puritans hanged an old bedridden weaver to appease the savages, since the real murderer was too useful a man to be spared.

One of Morton's most annoying offenses was the setting up of a Maypole — an "idle or idol May-pole," as Governor Bradford calls it. The picturesqueness of Morton's settlement, and the contrast that he suggests between two types of Englishman have appealed to many later writers. See, for example, Hawthorne's tale, "The Maypole of Merry Mount."

horrified at the idea of a priesthood with temporal authority, were really governed by their ministers. In a community which sought to know the will of God regarding every act it was natural that much weight should be given to the opinions of men specially trained in interpreting the scriptures. The ministers were consulted by legislators and governors, they sat beside the judges on the bench, and in



Pages from the *New England Primer*.

many ways, open and private, they influenced public affairs. In general they were a body of men worthy the confidence they received. Most of them, in the early years, were graduates of English universities, and many of them had distinguished themselves as scholars and preachers in England. Their publications were mostly sermons and pamphlets, but, as may be guessed from the scope of their activities, they did not confine themselves wholly to theological questions.



Probably the most notable of the early New England divines was JOHN COTTON, who came to Massachusetts Bay in 1633, and ministered to the first church of Boston until his death.<sup>1</sup> Only a little less famous than Cotton were THOMAS HOOKER and THOMAS SHEPARD. Hooker first preached at Cambridge, Massachusetts, and then, with his congregation, marched through the wilderness and founded the town of Hartford, Connecticut. Shepard succeeded Hooker in the pulpit at Cambridge. Cotton, Hooker, and Shepard, as well as many others almost as famous in their day, were graduates of the University of Cambridge, and had been preachers of distinction in England before they were expelled by Archbishop Laud for nonconformity.

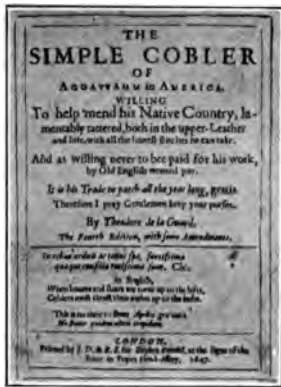
It is somewhat hard to see, from reading the works of these men, wherein their power consisted. Their published writings were largely sermons, often with such uninspiring titles as "The Saint's Dignity and Duty," "A Treatise concerning Predestination." These were long discussions — two hours was an ordinary



Statue of Thomas Hooker at Hartford.

<sup>1</sup> Cotton was a famous Puritan preacher in England — so famous that even before there was any thought of his coming to America the town of Boston, Massachusetts, was named in his honor after Boston, England, where he preached. Naturally the citizens saw a special dispensation of Providence in the fact that he was afterward brought among them. Cotton is credited with a hand in the preparation of the *New England Primer* which was used by beginners in learning for over a century and a half; and he was the author of the famous catechism for children commonly known by the abbreviated title of *Spiritual Milk for Boston Babes*.

length for a sermon, and four hours was not unknown; and they were divided into numbered headings and subheadings for the convenience of the hearers, many of whom brought pencil and paper to church and took notes. A few, which were intended to arouse apathetic sinners, contained vivid descriptions of the tortures awaiting lost souls in the next world; but the greater number were theological and appealed to the intellect rather than to the emotions.



Title-page of *The Simple Cobler*.

The ministers also wrote controversial pamphlets, many of which resembled the sermons in subjects and form.<sup>1</sup> One, the *Simple Cobler of Agawam*, by NATHANIEL WARD, is peculiar enough to be a literary curiosity. Ward had been a lawyer and had seen something of the world before he came to America in 1634 and served for three years as pastor of the church at Agawam, now Ipswich. The *Simple Cobler*,

which was published in London in 1647, is a tirade against toleration in religious belief, and against many other things of which the author disapproved, among them the fashions in women's dress and the wearing of long hair by the men. It was really addressed to English rather than to American readers, and was calculated to influence the unthinking

<sup>1</sup>Many of these controversies were over abstruse theological points, or such questions as the proper mode of baptism. Others were over such matters as the right of women to sing in churches — one party taking the admonition in I Cor. xiv:34 with extreme literalness, another holding that it applied only to speaking.

London rabble rather than the more earnest New Englanders. The author's method is one of bitter ridicule and vituperation, and he is fond of using long and barbarously coined words to characterize the things that he disapproves.<sup>1</sup> The ideas expressed in the *Simple Cobler* are contemptible for their narrowness, and the style is by no means typical of the New England controversialists; but its oddities have given it a certain notoriety while duller though more important pamphlets are forgotten.

**Verse Writing in Early New England.** — Aside from historical, religious, and controversial prose little was written in New England during the early years. There was no drama, no fiction, and practically nothing in the form of prose essays — these forms were regarded with abhorrence, or at least with distrust — and in poetry there were only a few crude attempts. It is true that many persons wrote verse, often, it would seem, for no other reason than to vary the monotony of their prose. Even Governor Bradford, who was surely far from being a poet, wrote in rhymes of the geography and the natural products of New England.<sup>2</sup> Perhaps the most common use of verse was in memorials of the dead, and there have come down to us many epitaphs and rhymed obituaries at which even the most reverent reader is tempted to smile.

<sup>1</sup> Thus, in speaking of fashions in dress he says: "It is a most unworthy thing, for men that have bones in them, to spend their lives in making fiddle-cases for futulous womens pñansies; which are the very pettitoes of Infirmity, the giblets of perquisquilian toys."

<sup>2</sup> A few lines chosen at random will serve as an illustration:

"All sorts of grain which our own land doth yield,  
Was hither brought, and sown in every field:  
As wheat and rye, barley, oats, beans, and pease  
Here all thrive, and they profit from them raise."

Another peculiar specimen of versification owed its existence to the feeling that the translation of the Psalms which was sung by the English Puritans was not sufficiently literal. Accordingly, the ministers appointed a committee of their number to prepare a version which should adhere strictly to the original Hebrew, and which could be used with the tunes then in vogue. The result of their labors was the *Bay Psalm Book*, which was published at Cambridge in 1640, and which, it may be noted, was the first book printed in New England. Nothing illustrates better than the *Bay Psalm Book* the way in which the Puritan's beliefs influenced his view of literary excellence. Since the *Bible* was the word of God, the *word* must be preserved in literal exactness at whatever cost. In order to secure accuracy the translators willingly sacrificed not only beauty of verse form, but all the simple dignified expression of feeling that abounds so wonderfully in the King James version.<sup>1</sup>

Three Massachusetts poets who wrote toward the close of the period deserve brief mention. The best of these was ANNE BRADSTREET, the daughter of Governor Dudley and the wife of Governor Bradstreet. She was born in England and came to America with her father and her husband in

<sup>1</sup> Compare two verses from the ninety-fifth Psalm :

“Because hee is our God, & wee  
    his pasture people are,  
& of his hands the sheep : today  
    if yee his voyce will heare,  
As in the provocation,  
    o harden not your heart :  
as in day of temptation,  
    within the vast desart.”

Still better, if you have access to a reprint of the *Bay Psalm Book*, find how some of your favorite passages of the Psalms are translated.

1630. Although she was the mother of eight children and performed all the numerous duties of a New England housewife, she found time to write a considerable body of verse. Several of her poems were published in London in 1650 with the unfortunate title — for which the modest Mrs. Bradstreet was not at all responsible — of *The Tenth Muse lately Sprung up in America*. The longer poems, such as “The Four Monarchies,” “The Four Elements,” “The Four Ages of Man,” are rhymed history, rhymed science, and rhymed moralizing, and they illustrate the Puritan feeling that literature to be worth while must definitely teach something. But Mrs. Bradstreet also wrote a few short poems that are not inartistically done. Of these the best is probably “Contemplations.”

More famous in his own day was MICHAEL WIGGLESWORTH, for many years pastor of the church at Malden, Massachusetts. Wigglesworth's chief work was the *Day of Doom*, a long poem in jiggling eight-line stanzas, which describes the last judgment and expounds in rhyme many of the doctrines of Calvinism.<sup>1</sup> The theme is a noble one, but the poem is little better than doggerel.

It is a sad fact that the *Day of Doom* had a degree of popularity probably never attained by any other American poem.

<sup>1</sup> Each class of sinners — for example, the heathen who never heard of Christ, and the infants who died at birth — is allowed to



Title-page of Anne Bradstreet's first volume of poems.

For over a hundred years it was read by every devout New Englander, and many persons, young and old, knew its two hundred and eight stanzas by heart. It must have had a considerable influence in continuing the low standard of poetry which it represents.

A third writer of verse was PETER FOLGER, Nantucket farmer and land surveyor, a man with little education, but with decided views of his own. In 1675, at the very close of the first colonial period, he wrote "A Looking Glass for the Times," a ballad in which he expressed frankly his opinions of the ministers and the magistrates — so frankly, indeed, that he evidently thought it prudent not to publish the poem. As poetry, Folger's work is beneath notice, but it serves to remind us that from the first there lived in New England a large number of plain, rude, hard-headed men who thought for themselves, though they wrote and published little, and whose views were often at variance with those of the rulers in church and state. It will be found that at a later date

plead its cause, and each is answered by the Judge. This gives an opportunity to state many of the objections often raised against Calvinism, and to give in easily remembered rhymes the arguments by which these objections were met. A few lines of the answer to the infants, who protested against being condemned for Adam's sin, runs:

"Would you have griev'd to have receiv'd  
 through Adam so much good,  
 As had been your for evermore,  
 if he at first had stood?  
 Would you have said, 'We ne'er obey'd  
 nor did thy laws regard;  
 It ill befits with benefits,  
 us, Lord, to so reward?'

"Since then to share in his welfare,  
 you could have been content,  
 You may with reason share in his treason,  
 and in the punishment."

these practical Yankees exerted a great influence on the intellectual life of America — an influence typified in the career of Folger's most distinguished grandson, Benjamin Franklin.

#### NEW ENGLAND COLONIAL WRITINGS, 1676-1765

**General Conditions in the Later Colonial Period.** — The same literary deficiencies that were noticed in the early period of New England were characteristic of all but the latest years of the second period. Unlike the Southerners, the New Englanders isolated themselves as far as possible from England. Except for the few years when Cromwell's party was in control in the mother country both political and religious considerations urged the New England Puritan to live his own life, to supply his own wants. In literature, in particular, the New Englander kept almost unchanged the unfortunate ideals with which he started in 1620. No copy of Shakespeare was offered for sale in New England for more than a hundred years after the settlement of Plymouth; and later writers of merit had almost as little influence as the Elizabethans. Even Milton, Puritan though he was, seems to have been neglected in New England until well into the eighteenth century. While a few writings of distinction were produced in New England between 1676 and 1765, it may be doubted if the average of literary merit was as high as in the earlier period. The graduates of Harvard College were hardly so well equipped for authorship as were the early ministers who had been trained in the English universities.

**Historical Writings.** — As in the first colonial period, historical and religious prose was produced in abundance. The nature of many historical writings was determined by the

French and Indian Wars, the troubles with the Indians which broke out about 1676, and continued at intervals until the Revolution. Some of these narratives were written only to gratify seasonable curiosity. Others were intended to condemn or defend the dealings of the government with the Indians. Still others, among them an interesting history by Increase Mather, aimed to show that the Lord was using the



A night attack by the Indians. A picture from an early American school reader.

savages to punish the people for lack of religious zeal. These histories were important as a group, but their names and their authors need not be given here.

The most interesting of the writings called forth by the Indian troubles were those which recounted the experiences of persons who were held as prisoners by the savages, and who were afterward ransomed or made their escape. There were many of these, but two are especially famous. One is the narrative of MARY ROWLANDSON, wife of the pastor at Lancaster, Massachusetts, who was taken prisoner in 1676. The other, *The Redeemed Captive Returning to Zion*, is the work of



the REVEREND JOHN WILLIAMS, minister at Deerfield, who was captured and taken to Canada in 1704. Both these authors wrote ostensibly to show the goodness which God manifested toward them, and they probably adhered strictly to facts. This can hardly be said of some writers who followed them. In an age when there were no novels and romances, narratives like these furnished the nearest equivalent for the "Wild West" stories and the tales of adventure that have gratified a later generation. Throughout the eighteenth century there were many of these accounts of captivity; and though they were usually written by clergymen or were accompanied by a testimonial from the pastor of the author, many of them were evidently colored to make the story attractive and exciting. They probably stood in a closer relation than has been supposed to the Indian tales of a later date.

The second colonial period in New England also produced historians who were not especially concerned with Indian warfare. The greatest of these was THOMAS PRINCE, pastor of the Old South Church, Boston, who apparently had more of the spirit of the modern historian than any other American of the colonial time. THOMAS HUTCHINSON, the last royal governor of Massachusetts, also collected documents and wrote a valuable history of Massachusetts Bay. The student of American literature need not trouble himself much about either of these men; but they are a reminder that the historical spirit, shown in the seventeenth century by Bradford and Winthrop and in the nineteenth by Bancroft, Prescott, Motley, Parkman, and others, was always strong in New England.

Of the men who left material of value to the later historian the most important was JUDGE SAMUEL SEWALL, whose diary covers the period from 1673 to 1729. After his gradua-

tion from Harvard, Sewall was college librarian, then studied for the ministry, and finally entered business and politics. Among other public positions he held the office of probate judge, and as such took part in the trials for witchcraft at Salem. His public avowal of repentance for this part, at a time when most of his associates maintained that they were in the right, is an act that showed bravery and nobility of character. Judge Sewall was a fine type of New Englander, and our liking for him is not diminished by the frank revelation which his diary gives of various foibles and weaknesses. Few writings produced in the colonial time are more interesting than this gossipy diary, or more valuable to the student of colonial life and customs.

**Religious Writings.** — The position of the ministers in New England changed somewhat during the second colonial period. As the people became more prosperous in a worldly way, they tended to become less devout, and to pay less attention to the advice of their spiritual leaders. Under the new charter of Massachusetts, granted by William and Mary, the right to vote was not based, as before, on church membership, but on a property qualification. This change tended to weaken the power of the clergy in political affairs. Much of the writing of the ministers during the later seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries was in protest, direct and indirect, against this decrease in their influence. From the many learned divines of the time three stand out with especial prominence — Increase Mather, Cotton Mather, and Jonathan Edwards.

INCREASE MATHER (1639–1723) and his son Cotton (1663–1728) were the leaders in the fight to retain the old-time power of the church. Increase Mather was the son of a distinguished Massachusetts clergyman, and his wife was a daughter of John Cotton. After receiving his education at

Harvard and in Dublin, he was called to the pulpit of the Old North Church, Boston, where he and his son preached for nearly seventy years. He was also for some years president of Harvard College. In 1688 he was sent to England as special representative of the colony, and was instrumental in securing the new colonial charter. His son Cotton, though long regarded as the leading intellectual light of New England, had a less eventful career. After his graduation from Harvard, he was settled as colleague of his father, and he continued his connection with the Old North Church until his death.

When in 1692 the witchcraft excitement broke out at Salem, both Increase and Cotton Mather were greatly interested. They believed, as did the majority of educated men of the time, that there might be witches, and both of them wrote in support of this belief. Cotton Mather took part in the discovery and trial of the accused persons.



Cotton Mather.

Much has been written on the motives which actuated the Mathers in this affair. The fact seems to be that, while their inclinations led them to be overcredulous, they were conscientious. Reference has already been made to the history which Increase Mather wrote in 1677 to show that the Indian wars were sent by God to punish the people for lack of faith. By the time of the Salem excitement the people were still more inclined to treat lightly religion and the ministerial

authority. It was probably natural that the Mathers should be ready to believe that God had permitted the scourge of witchcraft as a still more awful warning, and it is surely natural that if they believed this they should make the most, in sermons and writings, of so powerful an argument.

Both Increase and Cotton Mather were voluminous writers. The father is said to have published more than one hundred and fifty separate works, and the son is credited with more than four hundred. Many of these were sermons and small pamphlets, but others were of great bulk. One of the most interesting, though not the most valuable, of Increase Mather's books is his *Essay for the Recording of Illustrious Providences*, in which he tells many stories of the direct intervention of God in human affairs. This was published in 1684, but it shows the same pious credulity that was manifested in the witchcraft delusions a few years later.

The bulkiest and probably the most important of COTTON MATHER'S many writings is the *Magnalia Christi Americana*, or *Ecclesiastical History of New England*, published in London in 1702. This tells of the settlement of New England and of the establishment and experiences of the churches, and gives brief biographies of the governors and of many famous ministers. It was written too hurriedly to be wholly accurate, but it is the only authority for many facts in early New England history. Another work often referred to is the *Wonders of the Invisible World*, in which Cotton Mather philosophizes over witchcraft in general, and gives some account of the happenings at Salem as he saw them.

To many readers to-day the *Essay for the Recording of Illustrious Providences* and the *Wonders of the Invisible World* are the most interesting writings of Increase and Cotton Mather, respectively. One who judges these in the light of modern science is likely to form the erroneous idea

that the authors were absurdly superstitious and unreasoning. As a matter of fact their beliefs regarding witchcraft were shared by the great mass of educated men throughout the world, and both in intellectual power and in learning they ranked high among the English-speaking divines of their age. They were interested not only in theology but in such science as was then known,<sup>1</sup> and in all the practical affairs of life; and they wrote much that tended toward the social betterment of the people. Increase Mather, in particular, was a man of sanity and balance, who had much experience in the world and understood life. His literary style is not remarkable, but he usually wrote simply and plainly. Cotton Mather was probably abler and was certainly more learned than his father, but he had been somewhat spoiled as a youth, and he never had the experience of travel and intercourse with men that would have helped him to a saner estimate of his own importance.

His writings, while they have certain formal literary merits, are often crowded with pedantic displays of

<sup>1</sup> Cotton Mather corresponded with some of the most noted scientists of England. At one time he incurred great popular dislike because he favored inoculation for the smallpox, which before the discovery of vaccination was the most effective method of reducing the dangers of the disease. Many persons regarded it as wrong, since, they said, it was an attempt to interfere in a matter that should be left to Providence.

*Things for a Minister's People to think upon.*

Offered in the

## SERMON

To the General Assembly of the Province,  
of the Massachusetts-Bay, at the  
Anniversary ELECTION.  
May, 27. 1696.  
*Wherein,*

- I. The Condition of the Future, as well as the Former TIMES, in which we are concerned, is Considered.
- II. A Narrative of the late Wonderful Deliverance, of the KING, and the three KINGDOMS, & all the English DOMINIONS, is Endeavoured.
- III. A Relation, of no less than SEVEN MIRACLES, within this little while wrought by the Almighty Lord Jesus Christ, for the Confirmation of our Hopes, that some *Glorious Works*, for the welfare of His Church, are quickly to be done, is annexed.

By COTTON MATHER.

*Boston in N E Printed by B Green, and S. Allen,  
for Danvers Campbell at his Shop over-against  
the Old-Meeting House. 1696.*

Title-page of a sermon by  
Cotton Mather.

learning, far-fetched allusions, high-sounding words, and quotations from foreign languages. Both the Mathers, and especially Cotton, were men of the sort that one is



Jonathan Edwards.

always tempted to praise or to blame indiscriminately, and the student should take pains to note both their good and their bad qualities.

JONATHAN EDWARDS (1703-1758) lived and wrote a few

years later than the Mathers, when the question of ministerial power had taken on a slightly different aspect. A period of comparative religious apathy was followed about 1735 or 1740 by an emotional religious revival known as the Great Awakening. One of the earliest manifestations of this revival was in Edwards's parish at Northampton, Massachusetts, and Edwards published an account of it commonly known as *Narrative of Surprising Conversions*. About the time of these revivals there was an increase in the number of sermons which pictured the torments of the wicked in the future life. Edwards delivered several of these, and one, entitled "Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God" is especially famous. It was not really, however, as an emotional exhorter that Jonathan Edwards was most important. The greater number of his sermons were models of clear intellectual reasoning on questions of theology and practical religion, and his masterpiece, the so-called *Treatise on the Freedom of the Will*,<sup>1</sup> is still thought by many critics to be the greatest work on metaphysics by an American author. His power comes from his apparent intellectual honesty, his directness of thought, and a sort of liquid clearness of style that is in marked contrast to the involved and turgid sentences of Cotton Mather. He had, too, a fine personal quality, and a poetic feeling which are seldom shown in his philosophical treatises or his harsh threats of future punishment. The careful student will find him the strongest and the most fascinating figure in the New England colonies.

**Other Forms of Writing.** — During much of the second colonial period the attitude of the New Englander toward

<sup>1</sup> In this he discusses the apparent conflict between the belief that God determines every event, however small, and the belief that man is free to choose between good and evil actions, and is responsible for his choice.

polite letters continued the same as in the early seventeenth century. There was no drama, and no avowed fiction, though as has been seen accounts of experiences among the Indians probably stretched the truth. The Restoration prose and the verse of Butler and of Dryden, which set the literary fashions in the South, found for many years no imitators in New England. Even the writers of Queen Anne's time seem to have passed unnoticed. Toward the end of the period, however, a few young men took to writing verse in the heroic couplet and essays in the manner of the *Spectator*. Generally speaking, however, the influence of Butler, Pope, and Addison was not strongly shown in New England until the Revolutionary period.

#### WRITINGS IN THE MIDDLE COLONIES

**General Conditions.** — The Middle colonies were founded so late that for them there was virtually but one period in the colonial time. Indeed, though there was some writing in New York and New Jersey, it was only in Pennsylvania that any notable results in literature were achieved before the Revolution.

Pennsylvania resembled the South in the fact that men were free to read all kinds of English literature; in the more favored parts it resembled New England in the attention given to education, in facilities for printing, and in the fact that in Philadelphia a considerable number of men with literary tastes were so closely associated that they could stimulate each other. It may be helpful to remember that the greatest Philadelphia author was a native of Boston who came in early youth into the freer atmosphere of the Pennsylvania city.

**Franklin and his Associates.** — BENJAMIN FRANKLIN was



a grandson of Peter Folger, who has already been mentioned, and his family were typical representatives of the class of practical men to which Folger belonged. His early life should be learned from his *Autobiography*, and only the barest outline can be given here. His father, a hardworking maker of soap and candles in Boston, reared a family of seventeen children, and was naturally forced to practice in the strictest fashion the virtues of thrift and economy. At the age of twelve Benjamin, a bright but probably conceited boy, was set to learn the printer's trade. A little later he found an odd volume of the *Spectator*, and deliberately took this as the model for his prose style. At the age of seventeen he ran away to Philadelphia, where by his cleverness and industry he rose to a place of distinction in the community. He took a leading part in many movements, such as those to establish a public library, and a fire company, to improve the police system, and to found a college.<sup>1</sup> He published a newspaper, a magazine, and a series of almanacs, and he did so much for the art of printing that the printers of America have ever since observed his birthday as that of a patron saint. At the same time he dabbled in political affairs, and conducted the experiments that showed the identity of lightning and electricity. At the age of forty-two he had amassed enough property to warrant his retirement from business, and he planned to devote the rest of his life to scientific research. His reputation for practical sense and skill in managing men was so great, however, that his fellow-citizens continually called for his assistance during the troubled times that soon began, and until his death in 1790, at the age of eighty-four, he was almost continually occupied in political affairs at home and abroad. He was member of the assembly, postmaster general, agent for Pennsylvania

<sup>1</sup> Now the University of Pennsylvania.



Benjamin Franklin.

at London, member of the congress that adopted the Declaration of Independence, special commissioner to France during the Revolution, and member of the constitutional convention.

One of Franklin's biographers has happily called him "The Many-sided Franklin." He was statesman, scientist, inventor, and business man, as well as man of letters. He was greater in some of these other fields of activity than in literature, and his literary taste was defective; yet he has left the earliest writings which hold unquestioned rank as American classics.

For the student of literature three works stand out from the mass of Franklin's writings — the "Poor Richard Sayings," the *Autobiography*, and the "Bagatelles." The "Poor Richard Sayings" were first published in *Poor Richard's Almanac*, which Franklin edited while he was a printer in Philadelphia. Later he wove some of them into a supposed speech which was sometimes called "The Address of Father Abraham," and sometimes "The Way to Wealth." The class of New Englanders from which Franklin was descended had always shown a fondness for proverbs and neat sayings, fostered, perhaps, by their habit of quoting Bible phrases; and Franklin had a remarkable genius for making new proverbs and putting old ones into lasting form.<sup>1</sup>



Title-page of *Poor Richard's Almanac*.

<sup>1</sup> Among the many familiar sayings of Poor Richard are:

"God helps those that help themselves."

"One to-day is worth two to-morrows."

The *Autobiography*, in a literary way the most important of Franklin's works, was written so late in life that it belongs, strictly speaking, to the Revolutionary period; but it tells the story of the author's life only to 1757. This delightful narrative, which every American should surely read, owes its charm in part to the subject matter, and in part to the wonderful simplicity and frankness with which it is written.

JUVENILE POEMS

ON  
VARIOUS SUBJECTS.  
WITH THE  
PRINCE OF PARTHIA,  
A  
TRAGEDY.

BY THE LATE  
M: THOMAS GODFREY, Junr.  
of PHILADELPHIA.

To which is prefixed,  
Some ACCOUNT of the AUTHOR and his WRITINGS.

---

Pete adjutor meo st.      Hoz.

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PHILADELPHIA,  
Printed by HENRY MILLER, in Second-Street,  
M DCC LXV.

Title-page of Godfrey's Poems.

Few things are more difficult than for an author to speak of himself without appearing either conceited or falsely modest. Franklin avoided both dangers by being always wholly natural.

The "Bagatelles," the least important of the three works mentioned, are short sketches written by Franklin for his friends, while he was in France. These were great favorites with our grandfathers, and every school reader once contained "The Story of the Whistle," and

several others. They are, however, much more artificial than the *Autobiography*, and perhaps for this reason they have been less generally remembered.

Franklin was greatest as a thinker when he dealt with practical, commonsense ideas, and with the prudential virtues of

- "Little strokes fell great oaks."
- "It is hard for an empty sack to stand upright."
- "Early to bed and early to rise,  
Makes a man healthy, wealthy, and wise."

industry, thrift, and economy. As a writer he had the ability to make the presentation of such ideas charming, not by ornamentation or play of fancy, but by clearness and directness of statement.

Franklin mentions in his *Autobiography* a number of his literary associates in Philadelphia, several of them writers of some note in their day. One of the youngest of these, THOMAS GODFREY, is known as the author of the *Prince of Parthia*, the first tragedy written in America (1759). Godfrey had few advantages of education, and had little experience with the world when he made this ambitious attempt. The play is faulty in construction and often bombastic, but it was a creditable, almost a remarkable performance for an unschooled boy of twenty-three. Unfortunately the author died before his genius had time to develop. Several other friends of Franklin were, like himself, interested in natural science, and helped to give Philadelphia a position of pre-eminence as a center of scientific investigation.

#### GENERAL SUMMARY OF THE COLONIAL TIME

Since the early American writers are important chiefly for their influence on their successors, it may be well to close this study of the colonial time with a brief survey of tendencies and results.

The earliest settlers in the South brought with them the ideals of Elizabethan England and some knowledge of the masterpieces of Elizabethan literature; and throughout the colonial period educated Southerners read the latest works of English authors, and took these as the models for any writings of their own. Economic and social conditions combined, however, to make interest in education and in literature slight, and to discourage writing. The influence of

Southern colonial writings on the important authors of a later period is hardly noticeable.

In New England the first settlers, restricted as they were by their religious views, brought with them relatively little knowledge of the best that had been produced in English literature, and took as their literary models works of inferior merit, by members of their own party. Moreover, during the next century and a half New Englanders acquired relatively little familiarity with the writings of their English contemporaries, and conscientiously refrained from attempting many of the forms of literature that were being produced in England. The unfortunate literary ideals of the fathers were thus perpetuated, with little change, by the children. However, the Puritans were devoted to education and were fond of expressing their ideas; so that in the century and a half of the colonial time New England produced a body of writings relatively large in proportion to the population, and remarkably clear, earnest, and well-considered.

One other fact perhaps should be noted. Although the great majority of the writings in colonial New England were the work of the ministers and their associates, there lived along with these graduates of Cambridge and Harvard a large number of shrewd, hard-headed, scheming Yankees who were less notable for their devoutness than for their ability to drive a bargain or to overcome a practical difficulty. These men wrote little, or at least published little, during the colonial time, but they were an important element in New England intellectual life, and their influence counted for much in later generations.

As national events shaped themselves, much of later American literature came in direct line of succession from the early New England writings. The student should be able to trace in the work of many nineteenth-century authors the charac-

teristics inherited from the Massachusetts divines and from their more worldly parishioners.

The Middle colonies differed greatly among themselves in conditions of settlement and in the characteristics of their inhabitants. In Philadelphia, the chief intellectual center, conditions were in many ways more favorable to literary work than in either the North or the South. Here were popular education, good printing facilities, freedom to read the English classics, and to write what one chose, and a general interest in practical matters and in science. On the other hand there was less idealism and moral enthusiasm than in New England. In making the comparison it must be remembered, however, that the literary history of Philadelphia hardly begins before the second quarter of the eighteenth century, and that the brief Colonial period runs more closely into the period that follows than in the other colonies. The later literary influence of Philadelphia was second only to that of New England, and was on the whole an influence for good.

#### READINGS AND TOPICS

[NOTE. — The list of readings and topics here given and those which follow succeeding chapters of this book are intended only as hints and aids, and not as a course to be followed. They give an abundance of material and as great a variety as possible in order that the teacher, or the pupil with the approval of the teacher, may make a choice. Besides readings on important authors, and papers which any member of a class may easily prepare, they suggest a few out-of-the-way topics which may occasionally be used to give variety to the work, and may be of value to a specially prepared or specially interested student. These sometimes refer to works not generally accessible, but a satisfactory list of readings may be selected from a relatively few books. An attempt is made to indicate as far as possible the relative value of assignments, but the pupil's chief safeguard against undesirable tasks must be the advice of the teacher. It is hardly necessary to say that often the most useful topics for local

needs will not be found in the list, though they may sometimes be suggested by those here given.]

*General Suggestions.* — Any good school history of the United States may be used to freshen the student's knowledge of colonial history. An excellent presentation may be found in Thwaites's *The Colonies 1492-1750*. The history of contemporary English literature should also be kept in mind, and may if necessary be reviewed in any good manual. It is particularly important to note the relations between English and American authors.

The best general discussion of American literary history for this time is found in Tyler, *A History of American Literature during the Colonial Time*. For briefer treatments, see Cairns, *A History of American Literature*, Chap. I; Trent, *A History of American Literature*, pp. 1-130; Wendell, *A Literary History of America*, pp. 13-103. For the South, see Moses, *The Literature of the South*.

Selections from the writers named in the lists below will be found in Cairns, *Selections from Early American Writers*; Stedman & Hutchinson, *Library of American Literature*, Vols. I and II (writers from 1607 to 1676 in Vol. I, those from 1676 to 1765 in Vol. II); Trent & Wells, *Colonial Prose and Poetry*; and from some of the poets in Bronson, *American Poems*. Many brief illustrative selections are also given in connection with the criticisms in Tyler's *History of American Literature during the Colonial Time*, already referred to.

#### THE SOUTH

*Suggestions for Reading.* — The student should read brief selections from Captain John Smith and from William Byrd. [For SMITH, see Stedman & Hutchinson, *Library of American Literature*, Vol. I, pp. 3-17; Cairns, *Early American Writers*, pp. 1-18; Trent & Wells, *Colonial Prose and Poetry*, Vol. I, pp. 1-22. For BYRD, see Stedman & Hutchinson, *Library of American Literature*, Vol. II, pp. 302-309; Cairns, *Early American Writers*, pp. 259-272; Trent & Wells, *Colonial Prose and Poetry*, Vol. III, pp. 21-43.] If time permits he may also read from Strachey, *The Burwell Papers*, and *The Sot-Weed Factor*. The relation of each of these to contemporary English writers should be noted. [For STRACHEY, see Stedman & Hutchinson, *A Library of American Literature*, Vol. I, pp. 24-31; Cairns, *Early American Writers*, pp. 19-26. For the *Burwell Papers*, see Stedman & Hutchinson, *Library of American Litera-*



ture, Vol. I, pp. 450-462; Cairns, *Early American Writers*, pp. 181-189; Trent & Wells, *Colonial Prose and Poetry*, Vol. II, pp. 156-169. For the *Sot-Weed Factor*, see Stedman & Hutchinson, *Library of American Literature*, Vol. II, pp. 272-274; Cairns, *Early American Writers*, pp. 252-258.]

*Suggestions for Papers and Oral Topics.* — Interesting studies may be made of the impressions produced on the early settlers by the Indians. [For this topic it may be desirable to consult not only the writings of authors named in the text, but also of others, e.g., Alexander Whitaker, John Pory, and Colonel Norwood. For WHITAKER, see Tyler, *History of American Literature during the Colonial Time*, Vol. I, pp. 45-48; Stedman & Hutchinson, *Library of American Literature*, Vol. I, pp. 36-40. For PORY, see Tyler, *History of American Literature during the Colonial Time*, Vol. I, pp. 48-51; Stedman & Hutchinson, *Library of American Literature*, Vol. I, pp. 41-43. For COLONEL NORWOOD (about whom little is known), see Stedman & Hutchinson, *Library of American Literature*, Vol. I, pp. 50-90; Trent & Wells, *Colonial Prose and Poetry*, Vol. I, pp. 23-33.]

Those who have access to Smith's complete works may make a study, perhaps more amusing than valuable, of the probable truth of Smith's well-known account of his rescue by Pocohontas. [Compare the account of his visit to Powhatan in the *True Relation* with the story in his letter to Queen Anne written in 1816; see also C. D. Warner's *Life of John Smith*.] Students of "The Tempest" may first find for themselves parallelisms between Strachey's *Wrack and Redemption* and the play; then compare Tyler, *History of American Literature during the Colonial Time*, Vol. I, pp. 41-45, and Furness, Variorum edition of "The Tempest," pp. 313-315. Other suggestions for papers: The character of Smith as seen in his writings; The character of Byrd as seen in his writings; Traces of humor in Southern colonial writings. For suggested comparisons between Southern and New England colonial writings see below.

#### NEW ENGLAND

*Suggestions for Reading.* — In his study of the first Colonial period the student should read selections from at least one of the historians (Bradford, Winthrop), from at least one of the ministers (Cotton, Hooker, Shepard), from *The Bay Psalm Book*, Anne

Bradstreet, and Michael Wigglesworth. [For BRADFORD, see Stedman & Hutchinson, *Library of American Literature*, Vol. I, pp. 93-130; Cairns, *Early American Writers*, pp. 27-43; Trent & Wells, *Colonial Prose and Poetry*, Vol. I, pp. 34-69. For WINTHROP, see Stedman & Hutchinson, *Library of American Literature*, Vol. I, pp. 291-309; Cairns, *Early American Writers*, pp. 44-59; Trent & Wells, *Colonial Prose and Poetry*, Vol. I, pp. 90-119. For COTTON, see Stedman & Hutchinson, *Library of American Literature*, Vol. I, pp. 253-272; Cairns, *Early American Writers*, pp. 82-93; Trent & Wells, *Colonial Prose and Poetry*, Vol. I, pp. 156-181. For HOOKER, see Stedman & Hutchinson, *Library of American Literature*, Vol. I, pp. 189-202; Trent & Wells, *Colonial Prose and Poetry*, Vol. I, pp. 214-229. For SHEPARD, see Stedman & Hutchinson, *Library of American Literature*, Vol. I, pp. 216-231; Cairns, *Early American Writers*, pp. 125-133; Trent & Wells, *Colonial Prose and Poetry*, Vol. I, pp. 230-249. For *Bay Psalm Book*, see Stedman & Hutchinson, *Library of American Literature*, Vol. I, pp. 211-216; Cairns, *Early American Writers*, pp. 73-81; Bronson, *American Poems*, pp. 2-3; Trent & Wells, *Colonial Prose and Poetry*, Vol. I, pp. 120-126. For ANNE BRADSTREET, see Stedman & Hutchinson, *Library of American Literature*, Vol. I, pp. 311-315; Cairns, *Early American Writers*, pp. 146-164; Bronson, *American Poems*, pp. 4-19; Trent & Wells, *Colonial Prose and Poetry*, Vol. I, pp. 271-287. For WIGGLESWORTH, see Stedman & Hutchinson, Vol. II, pp. 3-19; Cairns, *Early American Writers*, pp. 165-177; Bronson, *American Poems*, pp. 19-28; Trent & Wells, *Colonial Prose and Poetry*, Vol. II, pp. 47-60.] Those who have time should read from Thomas Morton, Ward, and Folger, and will probably find Morton and Ward more entertaining, though less significant, than the writers previously mentioned. [For MORTON, see Stedman & Hutchinson, *Library of American Literature*, Vol. I, pp. 147-156; Cairns, *Early American Writers*, pp. 60-72; Trent & Wells, *Colonial Prose and Poetry*, Vol. I, pp. 70-79. For WARD, see Stedman & Hutchinson, *Library of American Literature*, Vol. I, pp. 276-285; Cairns, *Early American Writers*, pp. 112-124; Trent & Wells, *Colonial Prose and Poetry*, Vol. I, pp. 250-270. For FOLGER, see Stedman & Hutchinson, *Library of American Literature*, Vol. I, pp. 479-485; Cairns, *Early American Writers*, pp. 178-180; Trent & Wells, *Colonial Prose and Poetry*, Vol. II, pp. 111-114.]

In his study of the second Colonial period the student should if possible read selections from one of the tales of Indian captivity (Williams's, Mrs. Rowlandson's), from Sewall's *Diary*, and from writings of Increase Mather, Cotton Mather, and Jonathan Edwards. [For JOHN WILLIAMS, see Tyler, *History of American Literature during the Colonial Time*, Vol. II, pp. 139-140; Stedman & Hutchinson, *Library of American Literature*, Vol. II, pp. 241-248. For MRS. ROWLANDSON, see Stedman & Hutchinson, *Library of American Literature*, Vol. II, pp. 52-62; Cairns, *Early American Writers*, pp. 190-198; Trent & Wells, *Colonial Prose and Poetry*, Vol. II, pp. 193-204. For SEWALL, see Stedman & Hutchinson, *Library of American Literature*, Vol. II, pp. 188-200; Cairns, *Early American Writers*, pp. 238-251. For INCREASE MATHER, see Stedman & Hutchinson, *Library of American Literature*, Vol. II, pp. 75-106; Cairns, *Early American Writers*, pp. 199-216; Trent & Wells, *Colonial Prose and Poetry*, Vol. II, pp. 215-230. For COTTON MATHER, see Stedman & Hutchinson, *Library of American Literature*, Vol. II, pp. 114-166; Cairns, *Early American Writers*, pp. 217-237; Trent & Wells, *Colonial Prose and Poetry*, Vol. II, pp. 231-285. For EDWARDS, see Stedman & Hutchinson, *Library of American Literature*, Vol. II, pp. 373-411; Cairns, *Early American Writers*, pp. 277-294; Trent & Wells, *Colonial Prose and Poetry*, Vol. III, pp. 143-189.]

*Papers and Topics.* — A comparison may be made between the character of Bradford or Winthrop and that of Thomas Morton as seen in their writings. A study of popular superstition and belief as seen in the writings of Bradford, Winthrop, and others, will be valuable if approached in the proper spirit, but there is danger of being too flippant or too patronizing.

It would seem that every American of New England ancestry should read at least one complete sermon of the sort that his grandfathers heard, and those who do so may be tempted to present a topic on the New England sermon. [For side lights, see Tyler, *A History of American Literature during the Colonial Time*, Vol. I, pp. 186-193; Earle, *The Sabbath in Puritan New England*; Child, *The Colonial Parson of New England*, etc. Sermons of the pre-Revolutionary time may be unearthed in many public and private libraries.] Other possible topics are: A study of the *Simple Cober*, Study of the *Day of Doom*, Early New England epitaphs and elegies.

[See Tyler, *A History of American Literature during the Colonial Time*, Vol. I, pp. 266-271, Vol. II, pp. 9-11, 38-43]; A comparison between early historical writers in Virginia and Massachusetts, e.g., Smith and Bradford; *The New England Primer* (if a reprint is available) compared with modern textbooks.

For the second period many students will find Sewall's *Diary* the most interesting reading, and on selections from this may be based either an estimate of the author's character, or notes on New England life and customs. A study of witchcraft as seen in the writings of the Mathers (*Essay for the Recording of Illustrious Providences, Wonders of the Invisible World*) or of a New England Revival as seen in Edwards's *Narrative of Surprising Conversions* is interesting, but there is danger of thinking these matters more important than they are. Elements of interest in the narratives of Indian captivities would be an excellent topic for those who have access to at least one narrative complete, but should hardly be attempted from brief selections alone. Another possible topic is: A comparison of Increase and Cotton Mather.

#### THE MIDDLE COLONIES

*Suggestions for Reading.* — The student should if possible read Franklin's *Autobiography* complete, and should surely read selections from this work and from "Poor Richard." [See Stedman & Hutchinson, *Library of American Literature*, Vol. III, pp. 3-49; Cairns, *Early American Writers*, pp. 314-334; Trent & Wells, *Colonial Prose and Poetry*, Vol. III, pp. 190-236.] Selections from Godfrey's *Prince of Parthia* may be read by those specially interested in the drama. [See Stedman & Hutchinson, *Library of American Literature*, Vol. II, pp. 492-500; Cairns, *Early American Writers*, pp. 295-304; Trent & Wells, *Colonial Prose and Poetry*, Vol. III, pp. 281-283.] Students of American History may be interested in some of Franklin's political writings, and those of scientific tastes may turn to his accounts of electrical experiments.

*Suggestions for Papers and Topics.* — Topics on this period will naturally deal with the great central figure, Franklin, and their character may depend on the student's interests as hinted in the preceding section. An attempt may be made to distinguish from the *Autobiography* the elements in Franklin's character that he derived from New England and those that he derived from his

experiences in the larger world. More specific topics, such as Franklin's ideas of duty, Franklin's methods of dealing with men, Franklin's varied activities, A character sketch of "Poor Richard," What Franklin's Proverbs really teach, Why we are interested in the *Autobiography*, will readily suggest themselves. Those who are fresh from the study of Shakespeare's plays may trace the imitation of the Elizabethan manner in Godfrey's *Prince of Parthia*.

## CHAPTER II

### THE REVOLUTIONARY PERIOD

1765-1800

**General Conditions.** — The second period in the literary history of America extends from the beginning of the agitation which resulted in the independence of the colonies until a time when the national government was firmly established. In order to understand the development of American literature during these troubled years it is necessary to remember the many and rapid changes in the interests and the thoughts of the people.

From the passage of the stamp act (1765) until after the inauguration of Washington (1789) all thinking Americans were intensely interested in politics — so intensely interested that most of what they read and wrote dealt, directly or indirectly, with political questions. So closely did writing follow public affairs that each change of political situation might almost be said to mark a new literary period.

From the stamp act to the Declaration of Independence was a time of agitation over the rights of the colonies and the duty of men toward government. The writings most typical of this period were the argumentative orations, pamphlets, newspaper articles, and state papers which discussed the many questions that were constantly arising.

During the war men felt that the time for argument had gone by. Though there were discussions on various matters,

the most representative writings were those which expressed the loyalty and enthusiasm of the author, and strove to encourage others.

From the treaty of peace to the adoption of the Constitution men thought of what should be done with their newly won independence, and what the form of the new government should be. Argumentative writings were again prominent, and there were also many patriotic rejoicings and some ambitious attempts at an American literature.

When the Constitution was adopted, and Washington, the national hero, was made president, there followed a time of great national self-satisfaction and glorification, broken of course by some sectional and partisan bickerings.

Each of these four brief periods was in a way distinct from the others. They were, however, bound together by the fact that the Revolution was chiefly a young men's movement so that many of the men who wrote and spoke in 1765 continued active throughout the rest of the century, and even longer.

Although the colonies united for political action, and later merged into one nation, sectional differences continued strong, and the most convenient grouping of authors is still the geographical one. In following this chapter the student should particularly notice to which of the subperiods each work belongs.

#### NEW ENGLAND

**Boston Orators and Pamphleteers.** — New England continued, as in the colonial time, to be prolific in published writings, but interest was now changed from theology and religion to theories of government, and colonial rights. Boston was conspicuous in determined opposition to the English measures for taxation, and the names of Lexington, Concord,

and Bunker Hill remind us that it was in the vicinity of Boston that the first open hostilities appeared. The city, as will be seen later, lost something of the preëminence which it had held in general literature, but in political writings it

took the lead. Many patriot writers and speakers, like JAMES OTIS, SAMUEL ADAMS, and JOHN ADAMS, have been remembered as leaders in the cause of liberty, and their names are still generally known. Fame has been less kind to those who took the unpopular Tory side, but the average of the Tory writers was as high as that of the patriots, perhaps even higher in culture and literary training. It is not necessary here to discuss in detail the numerous speeches, pamphlets, and newspaper articles of these men, but their work is important because it constituted a great element in the reading of the



Title-page of a patriotic almanac of 1770 with portrait of James Otis.

people for a number of years; because it had a dignity and a soundness of intellectual appeal that political controversy often lacks; and because it set fashions of public writing and speaking that were to be followed in America for two or three generations. This remark applies with equal force, it may be noted, to the best political literature produced in other sections of the country.



**Miscellaneous New England Writings.** — Political feeling in Boston was so intense, and the city suffered so severely during the early years of the Revolution, that there was little energy for the writing of anything that had not a political bearing. Possibly it was because men were so much occupied with public affairs that several of the best remembered Boston writers of the time were women.

MRS. MERCY OTIS WARREN, sister of James Otis, was as ardent a patriot as her brother, and just before the Revolution wrote the "Adulator" and the "Group," two satirical dramatic poems in which the characters represent well-known patriots and Tories. Later she wrote two tragedies which are intended to teach general political lessons, and a history of the Revolution, full of her own reminiscences and opinions. Her letters also give interesting glimpses of the period, and show the formal, artificial manner of correspondence then in vogue.<sup>1</sup>

The works of MRS. SUSANNA HASWELL ROWSON are of little real importance, but may serve as examples of a great quantity of moral and sentimental writing which the taste of the time seemed to demand. Mrs. Rowson was born and spent her early years in Boston, but was in England from the outbreak of the Revolution until 1793. She then returned to America, went on the stage, and later conducted a fashionable school for Boston girls. Her tearfully sentimental romance, *Charlotte Temple*, which is still to be read in various

<sup>1</sup> Thus, she wrote to her son, who was attending college: "Happy beyond expression will you be, my son, if amidst the laudable prosperity of youth and its innocent amusements: you ever keep that important period in view which must wind up this fleeting existence, and land us on that boundless shore where the profligate can no longer soothe himself in the silken dream of pleasure, or the infidel entertain any further doubts of the immortality of his deathless soul."

paper-covered editions, was written in England. After her return to America she published essays, poems, and other tales, all with an old-fashioned moral and sentimental tone.

The acceptance in New England of even this moralizing fiction shows an advance in liberality over the colonial time. A still greater advance is shown by the fact that Mrs. Warren adopted the dramatic form for her satires, and that twenty

years later Boston mothers would intrust their daughters to a preceptress who had been on the stage. Still, stage plays were not legally allowed in Boston before 1793;<sup>1</sup> and when ROBERT TREAT PAINE, Jr.,<sup>2</sup> a Boston poet of some ability but of dissipated habits, came to a bad end, many persons attributed his moral failure to the fact that he married an actress and wrote a theatrical prologue or two. Paine's best poems were a



Susanna Rowson.

<sup>1</sup> In most American cities where the theater was forbidden by law the authorities connived at the production of plays before the prohibition was formally removed. Some of the subterfuges resorted to were amusing. For example, "Othello" has been performed under the heading, as advertised on the playbills, "Moral lectures on the subject of jealousy."

There were attempts at play-writing in various New England colonies before 1800. Some of these are very interesting to the student of the theater in America, but have hardly enough literary merit to be considered here.

<sup>2</sup> R. T. Paine, Jr., was originally named Thomas, and was so

bombastic patriotic song, "Adams and Liberty," and a moralizing poem in the heroic couplet, "The Ruling Passion."

**The Hartford Wits.** — While Boston was making a rather unimportant showing except in purely political writings, more ambitious work was being undertaken a little to the southward. The change of literary leadership from Massachusetts to Connecticut was due partly to the hardships which Boston suffered as a result of the war, and partly to religious and political conditions too complicated to be traced here. Connecticut was prosperous commercially, and both the community and Yale College were conservative in politics and religion. The Connecticut writers were accordingly mostly Federalists<sup>1</sup> and orthodox Congregationalists. A group of these writers, known by their contemporaries as the "Hartford Wits,"<sup>2</sup> included JOHN TRUMBULL, TIMOTHY DWIGHT, JOEL BARLOW, and several men of lesser importance.

It was said in the preceding chapter that about the close of the Colonial period young men here and there came to recognize the charm of the eighteenth-century English prose and verse, and to attempt imitations. The older of the Hartford Wits were such young men; and if political troubles had not arisen, they might have continued to write light and witty copies of Addison and Pope. In 1769–1770 JOHN TRUMBULL, then a graduate student at Yale, published in a news-

known when his earlier poems were published. When the irreverence of the *Age of Reason* (see p. 64) made the more famous Thomas Paine unpopular, the poet petitioned the authorities to take the name of his father, the well-known patriot. Thereafter it was a favorite joke of his to say that he now had a "Christian" name.

<sup>1</sup> The Federalists were the conservative party, and favored a strong central government, and laws that would preserve and strengthen property rights.

<sup>2</sup> "Wits" was used in the old sense of men who think and express their thoughts, and had nothing to do with the idea of humor.

paper two series of essays imitative of the *Spectator*. A little later, while tutor at Yale, he wrote *The Progress of Dulness*, a poem in Hudibrastic measure satirizing higher education



An early illustration for *McFingal*; preparations for the tarring and feathering.

as it was managed in New England. He then read law in the office of John Adams at Boston, and here naturally transferred his interest from social foibles and systems of education to political questions. After two or three lesser poems on



*Conquest of Canaan*, an epic poem in eleven books; and in 1794, *Greenfield Hill*, a narrative and pastoral poem in seven parts. Later he became President of Yale and wrote some sedate works in prose, and a little verse satire. Dwight was an ardent patriot, but unlike Trumbull he did not write much on political events themselves. His most significant works are the *Conquest of Canaan* and *Greenfield Hill*. The former, we are told, was a juvenile performance, written between 1771 and 1774; but some passages which refer to the Revolution were certainly added later, and very likely the whole was revised before it was first published in 1785. It doubtless owed its origin in 1771 to the young poet's reading of Pope, but its publication, and the composition of *Greenfield Hill*, may be taken as expressions of the feeling that the new nation must at once produce a national literature. In the preface to the *Conquest of Canaan*, Dwight himself calls attention to the fact that his poem is the first epic to be published in the country. It is significant that though the author was anxious for an American literature, there is nothing distinctly national, or even individual, about his work. His epic is on an old-world subject,<sup>1</sup> and is written in the most conventional of meters, the heroic couplet. In *Greenfield Hill* his plan, at first, was to imitate in each of the seven parts a different English poet. The attempt to achieve a national literature by mere copying seems amusing to us now, but it was made by more than one American. Dr. Dwight was a man of great ability and earnestness, and occasionally, as in his familiar hymn beginning, "I love thy kingdom, Lord," he expressed himself in genuine poetry. Ordinarily, however, his verse was rather monotonous and uninspired.

<sup>1</sup> It is based on the account in the *Book of Joshua*, but the author took considerable liberties with the scripture narrative.

JOEL BARLOW, who was a little younger than Trumbull and Dwight, had a varied career. After his graduation from Yale in 1778, he studied divinity for a few weeks, was licensed to preach, and secured an army chaplainship. After the war he was lawyer and country editor, and revised the translation of the Psalms for the Congregationalists of Connecticut. He went to England as agent for a land company, then to France, where he was active in politics. Still later he was United States minister to France. To some of his contemporaries his beliefs and his principles seemed as changeable as his occupations, and unlike the other Hartford Wits he was suspected of being dangerously liberal in both politics and religion. While chaplain in the army, Barlow wrote the *Vision of Columbus*, which he later expanded into the *Columbiad*. While he was abroad, he wrote some prose and verse on political subjects, and a mock-heroic poem, *Hasty Pudding*. The latter was inspired by his being served, in an out-of-the-way French inn, with corn meal "mush," a dish that had been familiar in his New England boyhood. It is his cleverest, perhaps his best, work.<sup>1</sup> More ambitious and more typical of the author, as most people saw him, were the *Vision of Columbus* and the *Columbiad*. The latter, though not published until 1807, should be considered here, since it is really an expansion of the earlier production. In both poems Hesper, the genius of the Western world, takes Columbus from prison, where he was confined in his old age, and shows him in vision the continent that he has discovered, and its future history. Barlow had more talent than either Trumbull or Dwight, and he sometimes showed real poetic power.

<sup>1</sup> It was the fashion of the authors of epics and other ambitious works to dedicate them to Washington. Barlow had sufficient sense of humor to dedicate this mock-heroic treatment of a culinary subject to Mrs. Washington.

Unfortunately, he was wholly without restraint or sense of proportion, and the reader is so often struck by bombastic and ludicrously over-rhetorical expressions that he is likely to overlook the bits that are really good. Strangely enough, the *Columbiad* is far more bombastic than the juvenile poem.

Trumbull, Dwight, and Barlow collaborated with a number of lesser Hartford Wits in the production of several political satires, all of which supported the conservative or Federalist party. Probably the best of these satires was the *Anarchiad*, which was published in 1786-1787. This purports to be a translation of passages from a prehistoric epic found in the Indian mounds of Ohio, and gives ironical praise to the reign of Anarchy which, the Federalists believed, would follow the victory of the liberal or Democratic party. The *Echo*, a somewhat later satire, was, as the name implies, a series of burlesque paraphrases of passages from speeches, public documents, etc., and was often bitterly personal. Two facts should be noted with regard to these writings: first, they lacked the spontaneous give and take of popular satire, but were the elaborately planned work of men with formal literary habits; second, they often descended, especially toward the close of the century, to trivial and ill-tempered personalities. Though one might expect far more bitterness of feeling in 1774 than twenty years later, *McFingal* is much cleaner and better natured than the *Echo*. A similar degeneration will be noticed in the political satire of the Middle states.

The Hartford Wits were able and earnest men, who did much, in ways that this history has not time to trace, for American literature and the development of literary taste in America. Unfortunately, they were imitative in their writings, and still more unfortunately they chose as models the English writers of the eighteenth century whose own works



were soon to go out of fashion. It was natural that these rather weak disciples should experience the fate of their masters, and in even a greater degree. The temptation now is to ignore them, or to ridicule them. There is much to ridicule, but it should be remembered that in their own day English as well as American critics thought that there was much to praise. Whatever their defects, the *Conquest of Canaan* and the *Columbiad* exerted a considerable influence on the taste of the next generation. When Bryant, Longfellow, and Whittier were boys, Barlow, Trumbull, and Dwight were "the greater American poets."

### THE MIDDLE REGION

**Literary Centers.** — The chief centers of literary activity in the middle region were New York City and Philadelphia. Several writers belonged to New Jersey, but most of these had their literary associations with one or the other of the cities just outside the borders of that state.

**New York.** — The greatest patriot writer of New York was ALEXANDER HAMILTON, a West Indian by birth, who in 1774 was a student at King's College, now Columbia University. In this year the REVEREND SAMUEL SEABURY<sup>1</sup> wrote three able pamphlets on the loyalist side, which he signed "A Westchester Farmer." Hamilton, then a boy only seventeen years of age, wrote two pamphlets which are often considered the best of the many replies to the "Westchester Farmer." From this time until his unfortunate death in 1804 Hamilton was active in the service of his adopted country, and his writings on political and economic subjects fill many volumes. To the general reader the most

<sup>1</sup> Afterward Bishop Seabury of the American Episcopal Church.

important of these is the *Federalist*. This was a series of papers published in New York in 1787-1788 in support of the proposed Constitution. The great majority of the numbers were written by Hamilton, but a few were by JOHN JAY and JAMES MADISON. This remarkable series of newspaper articles was written with such simplicity and fairness that it had the greatest influence on popular opinion. At the same



Alexander Hamilton.

time it presents an analysis of the Constitution so logical and profound that it has become a recognized authority on the nature of our government. Perhaps no other political writing of recent times has combined so well the qualities of a campaign document and a truly statesmanlike utterance of principles.

Though New York was to be the chief literary center of the country during the next period, it produced little of importance in general literature before 1800. The

city was fairly liberal in regard to theatrical representations, and attracted men interested in the drama. WILLIAM DUNLAP, a versatile author, artist, and business man, managed a New York theater, wrote several plays of his own, and adapted others from foreign playwrights. His comedy "The Father," and his historical tragedy "Andre" are best worth remembering.

**Pennsylvania.** — The writings of Franklin, the greatest

figure in Philadelphia during the later eighteenth century, have been discussed in the preceding chapter. Franklin was abroad on public missions much of the time after 1765, and hence contributed less than might have been expected to the controversial writings of the Revolution. To the student of literature the next most important political writer is THOMAS PAINE. Paine was born in England and came to Philadelphia in 1774, with letters of introduction from Franklin. He at once took an interest in American affairs, and early in 1776 published *Common Sense*, sometimes said to be the first pamphlet which openly advocated the independence of the colonies. During the war he wrote at irregular intervals the *Crisis*, a series of papers intended to explain and defend the acts of the colonial authorities, and to encourage disheartened patriots.<sup>1</sup> Later he went to Eng-

In the Press,  
and speedily will be published;  
THE  
**FEDERALIST,**  
A Collection of Essays written in fa-  
vor of the New Constitution.  
By a Citizen of New-York.  
Corrected by the Author, with Additions  
and Alterations.

*This work will be printed on a fine Paper  
and good Type, in one handsome Volume duo-  
decimo, and delivered to subscribers at the  
moderate price of one dollar. A few copies  
will be printed on superfine royal writing pa-  
per, price ten shillings.*

*No money required till delivery.*

*To render this work more complete, will be  
added, without any additional expence,*

**PHILO-PUBLIUS,**  
A.N.D THE  
*Articles of the Convention,*  
*As agreed upon at Philadelphia, Septem-  
ber 17th, 1787.*

An advertisement of the *Federalist*.

<sup>1</sup> The first number opens in resounding fashion, and the first words, at least, have become proverbial: "These are the times that

land, and to France, where he wrote, among other things, *The Rights of Man*, a political treatise, and the *Age of Reason*, an attack on some accepted religious beliefs. The *Age of Reason* and his association with French free-thinkers made Paine very

T H E

## AMERICAN CRISIS,

NUMBER I.

BY THE AUTHOR OF COMMON SENSE.

**T**HESE are the times that try men's souls: The summer soldier and the sunshine patriot will, in this crisis, shrink from the service of his country; but he that stands it *now* deserves the love and thanks of

The beginning of the *Crisis* as first published.

unpopular, and led many persons to forget that at the close of the war he was one of the most honored citizens of America. The two works with which we are most concerned are *Common Sense* and the *Crisis*. These are assuredly among

try men's souls. The summer soldier and the sunshine patriot will, in this crisis, shrink from the service of his country; but he that stands it *now* deserves the love and thanks of man and woman."

the most important political writings of the Revolutionary time. Paine was not a very deep or a very logical thinker, and his literary style, which he acquired almost wholly after he came to Philadelphia, shows many technical rhetorical faults; but he took the view of the common man, he was enthusiastic, and he knew how to write plainly, effectively, and often with dignity.

Among other Philadelphia controversialists was JOHN DICKINSON, sometimes known as the "Penman of the Revolution." He wrote many pamphlets and newspaper articles, and historians testify to his great influence, but the present-day reader may find his prose dull and disappointing.

A lighter and more versatile writer was FRANCIS HOPKINSON, who spent most of his life in Philadelphia, though he resided for a time in New Jersey, and signed the Declaration of Independence as a representative of that colony. Hopkinson was an able lawyer and a judge, but he found time for many things besides his profession. He was interested, as a clever amateur, in the fine arts, and he wrote many essays, and light verses, some of which he set to music. The most famous though not the best of his poems was his satiric ballad, "The Battle of the Kegs," written during the British occupation of Philadelphia. His many prose essays include two political allegories, "A Pretty Story" and "The New Roof."<sup>1</sup> Hopkinson was by no means the greatest of the Philadelphia writers, but he is one of the most interesting,

<sup>1</sup> "The Battle of the Kegs" ridicules the alarm felt by the British in Philadelphia when the patriots floated bombs, made of kegs filled with gunpowder, down among the shipping in the Delaware. "A Pretty Story" (1774) tells of an old farmer (John Bull), his farm (England), his sons (the colonists), and the new farm (America). In "The New Roof" the question is whether to repair the old roof (the Articles of Confederation), or to make an entirely new roof (the Constitution).

and he should be remembered as evidence that America was now producing gentlemen who showed both eminence in a profession and wide general culture.



Independence Hall.

Between the close of the Revolution and 1800 a considerable amount of political satire was written in Philadelphia, some of it by Europeans who had come to America. WIL-

LIAM COBBETT, an English editor and pamphleteer who under the pen name of "Peter Porcupine" was notorious in the political controversies of two hemispheres, lived in Philadelphia from 1792 to 1800, and wrote in support of the Federalist party. One of his most vigorous opponents was MATHEW CAREY, a political exile from Ireland, who came to Philadelphia in 1784 and was a conspicuous figure there for more than fifty years. Both Cobbett and Carey were able men, and advanced some real arguments in support of their positions, but a great part of their controversial writings consisted of personal attacks.<sup>1</sup> The degeneration of political satire, which has already been noticed in the later work of the Hartford Wits, was even more marked in the Middle states, and gentlemen of real refinement were guilty of language that would now be heard only from blackguards.

HUGH HENRY BRACKENRIDGE, a Pennsylvanian who lived for some time at Pittsburg, in what was then the Far West, was a more humorous and a less bitter satirist. His *Modern Chivalry*, the first part of which was published at Pittsburg, in 1796, tells in the rollicking style of Smollett and Fielding the imaginary adventures of a Captain Farrago and his Irish servant, and touches, more by hints than by direct preaching, on some of the defects of a democratic society. This work, the first written west of the Alleghany Mountains to be mentioned in this history, shows the tendency toward burlesque and boisterous exaggeration which has always been characteristic of the American frontier.

<sup>1</sup> Carey calls Cobbett "a blasted, posted, loathsome coward . . . a disgrace to the name of soldier," and "the most tremendous scourge that hell ever vomited forth to curse a people, by sowing discord among them." Cobbett was at least equally violent in his abuse. That this was, partly at least, a matter of rhetoric is indicated by the fact that a few years later the men were exchanging the most friendly letters.

At the very close of the century CHARLES BROCKDEN BROWN, the first American novelist worthy of the name, produced a series of remarkable tales. Brown was born in Philadelphia and always lived there except for some extended visits to New York. He became somewhat liberal in his political and religious views through a study of William Godwin, the English essayist and novelist, and it was Godwin's



Charles Brockden Brown.

novels that he took as models for his own prose fiction. His six tales, *Wieland*, *Ormond*, *Arthur Mervyn*, *Edgar Huntley*, *Clara Howard*, and *Jane Talbot*, were written in the years 1798-1801, inclusive. These contain many elements of mystery and horror, and deal with unusual physical and psychological phenomena.<sup>1</sup> Brown was thus the first of the American story-writers who, like Hawthorne and Poe, dealt with the mysterious and the weird. Though he had little or no influence on these

later masters, he is worthy to be remembered for himself. That he was not still more successful is due in part to the rapidity with which he wrote and in part to an unfortunate

<sup>1</sup> In *Wieland* one man meets death by some unexplained process of spontaneous combustion, and another is led to commit murder by hearing mysterious voices. *Edgar Huntley* is a story of a sleep-walker. Both *Ormond* and *Arthur Mervyn* present graphically the horrors of the yellow fever epidemic in Philadelphia.



choice of subjects and of literary masters. Many of his descriptions are most effective.

**New Jersey Writers.** — PHILIP FRENEAU, the most important poet of the Revolutionary time, had some associa-



Philip Freneau.

tions with both New York and Philadelphia, but properly belongs to New Jersey. He was graduated from Princeton

in 1771, and during much of his long life, which extended until 1832, was alternately sailor and editor. His prose writings and many picturesque incidents in his biography need not detain us here. As a poet he was remarkable for the possession of two different, indeed almost opposite, talents — one for writing the most bitter invective, the other for the expression of delicate imagination and fine appreciation of nature. The first of these characteristics is shown in his political satires.<sup>1</sup> He began to write these in 1775, and resumed them again in 1778, after a three years' absence in the West Indies. For some time these were the best known work of Freneau, but of recent years attention has turned to his other writings, and his worth as a poet has come to be better recognized. Some of his earlier poems, particularly "The House of Night," written while he was in the West Indies, show a vivid imagination, and, though uneven, great power of word painting. Shorter poems on plants, animals,

<sup>1</sup> Freneau at his worst may be seen in lines like these on Cobbett:

"Philadelphians, we're sorry you suffer by fevers,  
Or suffer such scullions to be your deceivers;  
    Will Pitt's noisy whelp  
    With his red foxy scalp  
Whom the kennels of London spew'd out in a fright,  
    Has skulk'd over here  
    To snuffle and sneer,  
Like a puppy to snap or a bull-dog to bite."

It is hard to believe this the work of the same man who wrote genuinely tender lines "To a Honey-Bee," "To a Caty-Did," "On the Sleep of Plants," and who could say in "The Wild Honey-suckle":

"By Nature's self in white arrayed,  
She bade thee shun the vulgar eye,  
And planted here the guardian shade,  
And sent soft waters murmuring by;  
Thus quietly thy summer goes,  
Thy days declining to repose."

the beliefs of the Indians, etc., indicate careful observation and sympathy with nature, and a light touch not to be suspected of a man whose satires are sometimes almost ludicrous for their bitterness. In this more imaginative work Freneau showed himself responsive to some of the influences that a little later manifested themselves in the Romantic movement in English poetry. He had more poetic insight than any other American whom we have thus far met, and was the most important American poet before Bryant.

JOHN WOOLMAN, a Quaker who traveled and exhorted where the Inner Light led him, in both England and America, was also a native of New Jersey. Woolman's *Journal* is a delightful revelation of the thoughts and experiences of a pure, if impractical, idealist. It is the sort of book that appeals to readers strongly, or not at all. Many distinguished critics whose temperaments have fitted them to enjoy it have ranked it among the greater works of American literature.<sup>1</sup> The general public, however, has been disposed to pass it by with little notice.

**The Song Writers.** — This is a convenient place to mention the songs and ballads produced during the Revolution. Since many of these are anonymous, they cannot be assigned to any section of the country, but a considerable number of those whose authors are known came from the Middle region. As is usual at a time of great popular excitement, there were many of these lyric expressions of feeling, some spontaneous, some deliberately studied. The ballads proper commemorated events of political or military significance, and were

<sup>1</sup> Charles Lamb said, "Get the writings of John Woolman, the Quaker, by heart." Whittier was a great admirer of Woolman; and in a list of "best books" compiled by President Eliot of Harvard, the *Journal* was included, though most works of later Americans were conspicuously absent.

either satirical or serious. An example of the former is Hopkinson's "Battle of the Kegs" already mentioned. The best of the latter is probably the anonymous "Hale in the Bush," inspired by the death of Nathan Hale.<sup>1</sup> "Yankee Doodle" is in ballad form, though not suggested by a particular event. This had the peculiar fate of being composed as a burlesque on the patriots, and of being adopted by them. The songs were of all sorts, but the greater number of them were written to fit popular tunes then in vogue.<sup>2</sup> Many sets of words favoring both patriots and Tories were adapted to the English tune "Hearts of Oak," then very popular. Among patriotic lyrics of the studied sort were the "Liberty Song," by John Dickinson, beginning:

Come join hand in hand, brave Americans all,  
And rouse your bold hearts at fair Liberty's call,

and "Columbia," by Timothy Dwight, already referred to. The loyalist songs and ballads have been less carefully preserved, since, after the beginning of the war, the loyalists had fewer facilities for printing, and since the authorship of loyalist songs was more likely to be kept secret. As might be expected from the fact that many of the loyalists were old-fashioned, conservative gentlemen, these are, on the average, more finished and less rollicking than the patriot effusions.

<sup>1</sup> The first stanza runs:

"The breezes went steadily thro' the tall pines,  
A saying 'oh! hu-ush!' a saying 'oh! hu-ush!'  
As stilly stole by a bold legion of horse,  
For Hale in the bush, for Hale in the bush."

<sup>2</sup> Many students will recognize the same tendency in the custom, common in schools which develop great interest in athletics, of arousing enthusiasm by local songs — words by some member of the school, sung to a familiar old tune, or to some temporary favorite of the vaudeville stage.

The Revolution produced no great national lyric. Indeed, the only song of the time now generally known is the ironical "Yankee Doodle."

### THE SOUTH

**General Conditions.** — In the conditions that affected literature the South had not changed much since the days of William Byrd. Education and familiarity with literature were more general than they had been in the earlier colonial time, but with the plantation system of life there were few centers of culture, and good usage still discouraged a gentleman from making literature more than a casual diversion. In quality of political writings, however, the South, and especially Virginia, the fu-



Jefferson's home at Monticello.

ture "Mother of Presidents," was in no degree inferior to other sections of the country. That the number of such writings was less than in New England was due in part to the lack of ready facilities for publication.

**Political Writers and Speakers.** — The most talented of the Virginia statesmen was THOMAS JEFFERSON. Some of Jefferson's early political writings brought him such a reputation that he was named by the Continental Congress as chairman of the committee to prepare the *Declaration of Independence*, and is chiefly responsible for the final form of that document. Later he wrote, besides many state papers, his *Notes on Virginia*. This work shows the extent of his information and the breadth of his interests, which included

natural science, methods of farming, and other practical matters, and what at a later date would be called political economy. His many writings produced between 1800 and his death in 1826 fall outside the limits of the present chapter. While invaluable to the student of history, they differ little in literary quality from his earlier works.

The *Declaration of Independence*, which as it stands is virtually Jefferson's work, exemplifies two styles of writing,



Thomas Jefferson.

both of which were long common in American political discussions, and each of which shows something of the author's habits of thought. The more formal and high-sounding, though somewhat vague parts, such as the famous opening paragraph, show Jefferson as a speculative thinker. The long and tellingly phrased list of charges against the King shows his interest in details, and his ability to present them with power.

The length of this catalogue of grievances now makes it somewhat wearisome, but in its day both this and the more rhetorical parts were equally effective. In recent years popular taste prefers a simpler and more direct form of expression, but the people, both at home and abroad, to whom the *Declaration* was addressed, deemed it one of the most remarkable documents of the world. All patriotic considerations aside, it is worthy of the closest

study, both for itself and for its influence on later American prose.

The greatest of the Southern Revolutionary orators was PATRICK HENRY. Though Henry had a long and influential



Jefferson Adams Franklin Sherman  
Livingston

The committee on the Declaration of Independence.

career, his popular fame rests mainly on two orations, neither of which is fully and authentically preserved. Of the first of these, delivered before the Virginia House of Burgesses at the very beginning of the struggle, in 1765, we have little more than one broken sentence.<sup>1</sup> The second, delivered ten

<sup>1</sup> "Cæsar had his Brutus; Charles the First had his Cromwell; and George the Third — [Here the speaker was interrupted by cries of 'Treason'] may profit by their example."

In Congress assembled by the Representatives of the UNITED STATES  
 OF AMERICA, in Congress assembled  
 do hereby declare that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty, and the pursuit of Happiness. That to secure these Rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed, that whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the Right of the People to alter or to abolish it, to institute new Government, laying its foundation on such Principles & organizing it in such Form, as they shall deem most likely to effect their Safety & Happiness. We declare that Governments long established should not be changed for light & transient Causes; and accordingly all experience hath shown that Man kind are more disposed to suffer while evils are sufferable than to right themselves by abolishing the forms to which they are accustomed. But when a long train of abuses & usurpations, begun at a distant period & pursuing invariably the same Object, evinces a design to reduce us to absolute Despotism, it is their right, it is their duty, to throw off such Government, & to institute new for their future security, which has been the patient sufferance of these Colonies; & now is our necessity, which constrains them to alter their former Systems of Government. The history of the present King of Great Britain is a history of repeated injuries and usurpations, all having in direct or indirect Object the establishment of an absolute Tyranny over these States, to prove this, let Facts be submitted to a candid world, for the truth of which we pledge a faith, not one word by falsehood.

Jefferson's draft of the Declaration of Independence.



years later before the convention which replaced the colonial assembly, is known from a report which was given by Wirt, one of Henry's biographers. This speech, with its famous climax, "Give me Liberty, or give me Death," has always been regarded as an American classic. Other and better preserved speeches of Henry show something of the same qualities as these two orations, though in a lesser degree. Henry was a man of courage, fire, and directness of speech, and had a command of the slightly artificial forms of address that in his day, more than in ours, were calculated to move people on occasions of excitement.



Patrick Henry.

That he was not, however, a mere juggler with words is proved by the respect in which he was held by his contemporaries, and by the fact that he was offered such important positions as Secretary of State, and Chief Justice of the United States.

#### GENERAL SUMMARY OF THE REVOLUTIONARY TIME

The years between 1765 and 1800 were a time of literary transition and aspiration rather than of great achievement in the forms of writing ordinarily called "literary." Though Woolman's *Journal*, the better poems of Freneau, and the novels of Charles Brockden Brown merit attention for themselves, none of them, except possibly the first named, really

deserves a place with the best work of nineteenth-century authors. The great fact of the time was the development of a national feeling; and this manifested itself spontaneously in a remarkable body of political writings, and self-consciously in more formal literary attempts. It is among the political writings that the real classics of the time are to be found. The speeches of Patrick Henry, the *Declaration of Independence*, and the *Federalist* — to mention only a few of the most conspicuous — are really works of literature, and they were accepted models of style until the middle of the nineteenth century. The more formal literary work of the time — the epics, dramas, and essays — suffered from a lack of real earnestness and inspiration. Some of it was written because the author wanted to produce literature, not because he had ideas that he was impelled to express. Almost without exception it was imitative of English models, and lacked vitality, as imitations almost always do. It was partly owing to the example of contemporary English authors that political satire during the period was often bitter, and toward the close of the century dirty and unpleasantly personal.

The development of a national consciousness could not change the intellectual habits of a people, and the chief sections of the country preserved much the same characteristics as in the colonial time. New England maintained the lead in literature, but there were now two centers, one in Massachusetts and about Harvard College, the other in Connecticut and about Yale. Of the two, Boston led in the production of political prose, Connecticut in miscellaneous writings. Both sections showed a growing liberality toward the drama and prose fiction, but the work done in these forms was of minor importance. The Hartford Wits reflected the conservative tendencies of Connecticut and imitated the

more formal English writers of the eighteenth century.<sup>1</sup> Probably the best work of the Hartford Wits is found in Trumbull's early satires. Their later writings were solid, dignified, and painstaking, but unoriginal and uninspired.

Though the Middle region could not show so large a body of writings as New England, or so closely related a group of authors as the Hartford Wits, it produced individual works of higher rank. It is necessary only to mention the political writings of Hamilton in New York and of Franklin and Paine in Philadelphia, the *Journal* of Woolman, the poems of Freneau, and the novels of Brown. Both New York and Philadelphia were more liberal than New England toward the theater and prose fiction. The one produced Dunlap, who is often known as the Father of the American drama; the other Brown, who was the first real American novelist.

The South continued unimportant in all forms of writing except the political, but in this it took, as usual, high rank.

It will thus be seen that the most important legacies of this period to the next were a thoroughly aroused interest in most forms of literature, and many excellent examples of political prose. For reasons which have been indicated, most of the verse, the hesitant beginnings of the drama, and even the novels of Brown were incentives to better and different work in the same line, not models for imitation. On the other hand the better political writings of the founders of the nation established a manner that was long worthy to be followed.

<sup>1</sup> It should be noted that, owing to the earlier distrust of secular literature, New Englanders came to the imitation of Butler and Addison a generation or two later than did Ebenezer Cook and William Byrd.

## READINGS AND TOPICS

*General Suggestions.* — The writings of this period are so closely connected with political events that it is essential that the student keep in mind the course of American history. The chapters on the Revolution in any good school history will probably serve to refresh his memory sufficiently, or he may consult a special work, such as Fiske, *The American Revolution*. The best extended discussion of the period of the war, combining both history and literary criticism, is found in Tyler, *The Literary History of the American Revolution*. For briefer discussions of the literature of the period, see Cairns, *History of American Literature*, Chapter II; Trent, *History of American Literature*, pp. 131-186; Wendell, *Literary History of America*, pp. 59-136.

Selections from all the writers from whom readings are advised are to be found in Stedman & Hutchinson, *Library of American Literature*, Vols. III & IV, and from the more important in Cairns, *Selections from Early American Writers*. Extracts from the more important writers of verse are given in Bronson, *American Poems*; and the discussions in Tyler's *Literary History of the American Revolution* are often illustrated by extended quotations.

In his readings for this period, particularly for the prose, the student should attempt to gain a knowledge of general characteristics, rather than to study intensively the work of individual authors. For this reason the choice of selections is somewhat less definitely indicated than in the suggestions that follow other chapters.

*Suggestions for Reading.* — It is hardly necessary that the general student read selections from the political writers of New England, provided he gives sufficient attention to work of this sort from other sections. Those whose study of American history has given them especial interest in the subject may, however, if the material is available, read selections from James Otis, Samuel Adams, John Adams, and others. [See Stedman & Hutchinson, *Library of American Literature*, Vol. III, pp. 113-116 (OTIS), 91-98 (S. ADAMS), and 186-205 (J. ADAMS). Better than brief selections would be one complete pamphlet, or a discussion, *e.g.*, that between *Novangelus* (John Adams) and *Massachusettensis* (Daniel Leonard).]

The miscellaneous Boston writers are relatively unimportant. If one is desired as a representative of the group, perhaps Mercy

Warren best repays study. Those who wish may glance at the sentimental tales of Mrs. Rowson as literary curiosities. [For MRS. WARREN see Stedman & Hutchinson, *Library of American Literature*, Vol. III, pp. 121-126; Cairns, *Early American Writers*, pp. 384-394. For MRS. ROWSON, see Stedman & Hutchinson, *Library of American Literature*, Vol. IV, pp. 176-179.]

The Hartford Wits require more attention. The student should read selections from Trumbull's *McFingal*, and if possible from the *Progress of Dulness*, from Dwight's *Conquest of Canaan and Greenfield Hill*, from Barlow's *Vision of Columbus or Columbiad*, and if possible from *Hasty Pudding*. [For TRUMBULL, see Stedman & Hutchinson, *Library of American Literature*, Vol. III, pp. 403-413; Cairns, *Early American Writers*, pp. 395-408; Bronson, *American Poems*, pp. 87-105. For DWIGHT, see Stedman & Hutchinson, *Library of American Literature*, Vol. III, pp. 463-483; Cairns, *Early American Writers*, pp. 409-420; Bronson, *American Poems*, pp. 108-115; Stedman, *American Anthology*, pp. 9-10. For BARLOW, see Stedman & Hutchinson, *Library of American Literature*, Vol. IV, pp. 46-57; Cairns, *Early American Writers*, pp. 421-430; Bronson, *American Poems*, pp. 116-133. Selections from the *Anarchiad* and the *Echo* may be found in Stedman & Hutchinson, *Library of American Literature*, Vol. III, pp. 422-429.]

Though the *Federalist* is somewhat difficult, the student should read enough to observe the author's method. [See Stedman & Hutchinson, *Library of American Literature*, Vol. IV, pp. 119-127; Cairns, *Early American Writers*, pp. 364-369.] Students interested in the drama may read selections from Dunlap. [See Stedman & Hutchinson, *Library of American Literature*, Vol. IV, pp. 208-221. Complete plays are difficult of access, but copies of "The Father" and "Andre" may be found in some libraries.]

The student should read selections from Paine's *Common Sense* and *The Crisis*, as examples of the political literature. [See Stedman & Hutchinson, *Library of American Literature*, Vol. III, pp. 219-236; Cairns, *Early American Writers*, pp. 343-352.] Well worth while for those who have time are one of Hopkinson's political satires, and a few of his poems, and selections from Brackenridge's *Modern Chivalry*. The latter should be associated with the development of literature in the West. [For HOPKINSON, see Stedman & Hutchinson, *Library of American Literature*, Vol. III, pp. 236-251;

Cairns, *Early American Writers*, pp. 372-383. For BRACKENRIDGE, see Stedman & Hutchinson, *Library of American Literature*, Vol. III, pp. 389-396; Cairns, *Early American Writers*, pp. 466-474.] Brown's novels should not be read at the expense of more important writings, but they are valuable as showing the beginnings of American fiction. If a complete novel is read, the best choice for a beginner is probably *Wieland*. [Selections from BROWN, unsatisfactory as selections from novels always are, may be found in Stedman & Hutchinson, *Library of American Literature*, Vol. IV, pp. 265-292; Cairns, *Early American Writers*, pp. 475-493.]

Freneau, as the most important poet of the time, should receive considerable attention; and every student should read enough from Woolman's *Journal* to determine whether or not it appeals to him. [For FRENEAU, see Stedman & Hutchinson, *Library of American Literature*, Vol. III, pp. 445-457; Cairns, *Early American Writers*, pp. 431-448; Bronson, *American Poems*, pp. 133-155; Stedman, *American Anthology*, pp. 3-8. For WOOLMAN, see Stedman & Hutchinson, *Library of American Literature*, Vol. III, pp. 78-85; Cairns, *Early American Writers*, pp. 305-313.]

Most students are familiar with the *Declaration of Independence*, and with Patrick Henry's two best speeches. Those who are not should surely become so, and all should if possible read other selections from Jefferson and Henry. [For JEFFERSON, see Stedman & Hutchinson, *Library of American Literature*, Vol. III, pp. 265-289; Cairns, *Early American Writers*, pp. 353-361. For HENRY, see Stedman & Hutchinson, *Library of American Literature*, Vol. III, pp. 214-217; Cairns, *Early American Writers*, pp. 335-342.]

The songs and ballads of the Revolution form an interesting indication of popular taste. Selections may be found in Moore, *Songs and Ballads of the American Revolution*; Sargent, *Loyalist Poetry of the Revolution*; Stedman & Hutchinson, *Library of American Literature*, Vol. III, pp. 338-361; Cairns, *Early American Writers*, pp. 449-465; Bronson, *American Poems*, pp. 66-78. See also Tyler, *Literary History of the American Revolution*, Chapters XXVIII, XXXI.

*Suggestions for Papers and Topics.* — Topics based on the literary qualities of political prose are likely to be dull and difficult, but those who are interested may compare the style and methods of two of the more notable men, *e.g.*, Jefferson and Hamilton, or

better Otis and Henry (as orators); those who have been reading Burke may compare his oratory with that of one or more of his American contemporaries. Topics may readily be found which combine historical and literary interest; e.g.: The occasions of Patrick Henry's great speeches (see biographies of Henry by Wirt, Tyler); The History of the *Declaration of Independence* (see Hazelton, *The Declaration of Independence*, or for less detailed and exhaustive accounts, *McClure's Magazine*, 17: 223; The *Open Court*, 5: 2859); The history of the *Federalist* (see lives of Hamilton, and introductions to various editions of the *Federalist*); Thomas Paine's work for American independence; The Songs and Ballads (or one group of them, loyalist, patriot, New England, etc.). The tunes to which these were adapted are still to be found in old collections, and they may be sung to or by the class. Political satire also affords good material for topics, e.g.: *McFingal*, either studied alone or compared with later political satire (The *Biglow Papers*); or, Hopkinson's political allegories. Those who can adopt a safe middle course between ridicule and undue praise may attempt papers on the nonpolitical work of the Hartford Wits, e.g.: *The Progress of Dulness* (compare it with *McFingal*, or consider how far the satire is applicable to-day; See Tyler, *Literary History of the American Revolution*, Vol. I, pp. 215-221); *Greenfield Hill* (What English poets does it suggest? See Tyler, *Three Men of Letters*, pp. 92-97); or on the *Vision of Columbus* and the *Columbiad* (compare two corresponding passages). Among possible topics on Freneau is Freneau's attitude toward nature (may be compared with Bryant's or Wordsworth's). The character of Woolman as seen in his *Journal* is worthy of consideration; or one may answer the question "Why did Charles Lamb say 'Get the writings of John Woolman by heart'"; or may compare the *Journal* with Franklin's *Autobiography*. Among general topics are: The change in poetic ideals since the colonial time; The development of humor (traced in both political and nonpolitical writings); The development of oratory (trace especially the change from pulpit to political oratory), etc.

## CHAPTER III

### THE PERIOD OF THE KNICKERBOCKER WRITERS

1800-1833

**The Trend of the Period.** — In the first third of the nineteenth century America produced a considerable body of writings that have lived and seem destined to live in general remembrance. Literary ideals changed gradually, on the whole for the better, and intellectual conditions became saner and more truly national. Before proceeding to a consideration of individual writers, it will be well to fix in mind a few facts regarding the period in general.

In spite of the disturbance caused by the War of 1812, literary relations with England were close and important, though not wholly cordial. Among the greater writers of the mother country at this time were Wordsworth, Coleridge, Scott, Shelley, Keats, and Byron. These belonged to the so-called "Romantic school," which opposed the classic or Popean school that had furnished models for the Hartford Wits. Americans responded readily to the teachings of these men, but were not wholly carried away by their theories. In a literary controversy distance in space gives somewhat the same advantage as distance in time. It was probably owing to the position of American critics, rather than to any remarkable literary acumen, that many of them were selective in their tastes, and that their critical judgments on English writers were often very like those of posterity. While



England was split into two opposed factions, the classicists and the romanticists, Americans saw the beauties and the defects of both Pope and Wordsworth, and to a certain extent followed both.

Contemporary English literature had, on the whole, a good influence on American writers. So, probably, did English criticism of American authors, which was more extensive than before.<sup>1</sup> Nevertheless, the prejudices that survived from the Revolution, national jealousy, and the feeling that America should be independent intellectually as well as politically, united to make international literary relations somewhat strained. Friction was increased by the patronizing writings of British travelers in America, who returned home after brief visits and wrote unflattering accounts of the new country. The charge was made at the time, and has often been repeated, that American writers were too subservient to English judgments, and that they therefore lacked the courage to express themselves naturally.<sup>2</sup> On the other hand it is probable that the strictures of British reviewers helped to diminish the feeling of patriotic self-satisfaction, and prevented many ludicrous exuberances. The whole subject of the literary interrelations between England and America is an important one, but is too complicated for discussion in a brief history.

One manifestation of intellectual activity was the great number of magazines and literary papers founded during the

<sup>1</sup> In the preceding period the *Conquest of Canaan*, the *Vision of Columbus*, and a good number of other works had been republished in England, and had been reviewed, often with considerable praise, in the leading British periodicals; but after 1800 there was more of this reprinting and reviewing, and Englishmen as a class paid more attention to trans-Atlantic writings.

<sup>2</sup> Many sensitive Americans were also troubled because American writers, especially Irving and Cooper, chose to live some time abroad.

period. These sprang up by the dozens, almost by the hundreds, in all sections of the country. They ranged from the most serious and bulky reviews modeled after the British quarterlies to "Magazines of Useful and Entertaining Knowledge," which offered in popular form information culled from the encyclopedias. Most of these periodicals were short lived, some lasting only for an issue or two; but they were evidence of a widespread interest in literary affairs.

Along with these more or less popular movements went development in scholarship. Both natural science and the modern languages and literatures came to receive more attention in American colleges. Several American scientists, notably PROFESSOR SILLIMAN of Yale, were eminent both as investigators and as writers. Both Noah Webster's *Dictionary* and its one-time rival Worcester's appeared late in the period. Between 1815 and 1820 several brilliant young men from Harvard, among them EDWARD EVERETT, the orator, and GEORGE BANCROFT, the historian, studied at German universities and brought back new ideas of scholarship and educational methods which eventually changed the character of American colleges. The death, during the early years of the century, of many of the founders of the nation called forth a great number of biographical and historical works, some of real scholarly value.

During this period the chief literary center of the country was in New York. New England, which had been hard hit by the Revolution, suffered still more by the restrictive commercial legislation of the national government, particularly by the embargo of 1807. The result was that the most energetic young men of New England emigrated to the westward, where New England influence is seen in the forms of government and the educational institutions of several states. New York, on the other hand, prospered. Along

with other commercial development came the establishment of publishing houses, newspapers, and magazines, all of which tended to attract writers to the growing city.

### NEW YORK

**The Knickerbocker Group.** — The chief literary men of New York during the early nineteenth century are often known as the “Knickerbocker Writers.”<sup>1</sup> Most of these were natives of other sections of the country, who had been drawn to the city by the excellence of publishing facilities or for other business reasons. While their personal relations were in most instances pleasant, they made no such closely unified group as did the Hartford Wits, or the Boston and Cambridge writers of the next generation. They had no general agreement in literary theories, and they exerted no great influence on one another.

The three greatest of the Knickerbocker writers were WASHINGTON IRVING, JAMES FENIMORE COOPER, and WILLIAM CULLEN BRYANT. Grouped about these were FITZGREENE HALLECK, JOSEPH RODMAN DRAKE, JAMES KIRKE PAULDING, and a number of lesser men, who, though interesting, must be passed unnoticed in a brief survey.

**Washington Irving.** — WASHINGTON IRVING, the dean, as it were, of the Knickerbocker group, was the only one of the three greater men who was a thorough New Yorker. He was born in 1783 in New York City, where his father was an importer of cutlery. As a boy of rather delicate health and the youngest son of a well-to-do family, he was somewhat petted and left to have his own way. He ended his schooling at the age of sixteen, traveled a little, studied law, not

<sup>1</sup> This title is of course derived from Irving's *Knickerbocker's History of New York*.



Washington Irving.

very earnestly, and became engaged to the daughter of his law preceptor. This young woman died in 1809, and the fact that a man of Irving's genial and domestic tastes never married is proof how much the tragedy meant to him. After the war in 1812, which was naturally a severe blow to a house which dealt mostly in merchandise imported from Sheffield, Irving became a member of the cutlery firm, and was sent to England to straighten out its tangled affairs. In 1818 the business failed, and Irving turned to literature.



Irving at the age of 22.

He remained abroad until 1832, working first in England, then in Spain, then in England again. On his return to America he settled at Sunnyside on the Hudson, where he lived quietly, except for four years' service as minister to Spain, until his death in 1859.



Launcelot Langstaff — one of the supposed authors of *Salmagundi*. From the first number.

It is easiest to remember Irving's writings by placing them in five groups, which correspond, in general, to the periods of his life. The first group includes the work produced before the failure of the cutlery firm in 1818. When a boy of nineteen, he wrote for a New York newspaper a series of essays which he signed "Jonathan Oldstyle," and five years later he joined with his brother, William Irving,



The old Dutch church at Sleepy Hollow.

and a friend, James Kirke Paulding, in the production of a more ambitious series, *Salmagundi*. These are unimportant in themselves, but are valuable as reminders that Irving began with imitations of the *Spectator*, as American boys of literary instincts had been doing for half a century. His juvenile pen name, Jonathan Oldstyle, also suggests certain qualities which are found in all his writings.

The one important work of the first period is *Knickerbocker's History of New York*, published in 1809. In this Irving got away from the strict Addisonian tradition, and especially from the tendency to preach which characterized most youthful imitations of Addison. The *History* purports to be the work of Diedrich Knickerbocker, a descendant of the old Dutch settlers, who writes of the three early Dutch governors of New York.<sup>1</sup> According to tradition it was planned as a burlesque on pedantic histories, but Irving abandoned this design and let his humorous fancy lead him where it would. He had begun the work before the death of his betrothed, and forced himself to finish it as a distraction from his grief. Though, like much eighteenth-century English fun, it occasionally grows too free to suit modern taste, it is an American classic, and one of the acknowledged masterpieces of American humor.

The second group of Irving's writings includes the three works produced in England after the failure of the cutlery business. The earliest of these was the *Sketch Book*, the first parts of which were published in 1819, just ten years

<sup>1</sup> Irving hoaxed the public by publishing in the New York newspapers, first, an account of the disappearance of Diedrich Knickerbocker from his boarding place; next, an advertisement signed by the supposed landlord, who gave formal notice that unless Diedrich Knickerbocker returned by a certain day a manuscript which he had left would be published to pay his board bill. The *History* was then announced as this manuscript.

after the *Knickerbocker's History*. Irving had now decided to depend on literature for a livelihood, and he turned for material partly to the romantic traditions of the Hudson River



Joseph Jefferson as Rip van Winkle.

valley, with which he was familiar as a boy, partly to his experiences and observations of travel.<sup>1</sup> Present-day readers prefer the former, especially the two stories "Rip van Winkle" and the "Legend of Sleepy Hollow," but at the time of publication, before travelers' descriptions had become so common, the pictures of English life, and particularly the sketches of English Christmas customs, were also enthusiastically received. The book was very popular in both England

and America, and Irving at once set to work on *Bracebridge*

<sup>1</sup> It is to be feared that many readers miss the point of the title, *Sketch Book, by Geoffrey Crayon Gent.* In Irving's day sketching was a common and valued accomplishment, and a tourist carried his sketch-book and crayons as he now carries his kodak. The name "Geoffrey" may reflect Irving's fondness for the quaint and old-fashioned.



*Hall*, in which he continues the two kinds of sketches that had been most praised — the accounts of Christmas customs in England, and the Hudson River traditions. The third volume of this group, the *Tales of a Traveller*, appeared in 1824. By this time Irving had, so to speak, written himself



Ichabod Crane's school; by Darley, a famous early American  
illustrator.

out, as is shown by the somewhat scrappy contents of this last collection. It contains stories which he had gathered during continental travel, sketches made by cutting up an abandoned novel, and some miscellaneous pieces. While worth reading, it is inferior to the two works that immediately preceded it.

In the *Sketch Book* Irving had gotten away from both the manner of *Salmagundi* and that of *Knickerbocker's His-*

tory, and had developed a style of his own. Suggestions there are, of course, of English authors, especially of the more quiet, formal, and humorous writers of the eighteenth century, but there was no direct imitation. The most noticeable characteristics of all these works are a fondness for the old-fashioned and the picturesque in both subject and style, humor, sentiment which rarely becomes sentimentality, and that indescribable good taste which always reminds us that the author was a gentleman.

The third group of Irving's writings deals with Spanish subjects. After the *Tales of a Traveller* Irving looked about for new literary material, and finally went to Spain, where he planned to translate a treatise on Columbus. He soon decided, however, on an original work. The most important results of this Spanish residence were the *Life of Columbus*, the *Conquest of Granada*, and the *Alhambra*.<sup>1</sup> The *Life of Columbus* is a serious, painstaking, and well-written work, but Irving was not at his best as a biographer. The boy who left school at sixteen had not acquired the training in scholarly methods which the modern historian needs, and a man of Irving's temperament was a little too likely to see the picturesque rather than the important events in his hero's career. The *Conquest of Granada* is in the form of a chronicle supposed to be written by an old monk. This use of an imaginary author worked well in case of the humorous *Knickerbocker's New York*, but was less successful in an attempt to portray serious history. The *Conquest of Granada* contains, however, many fine bits of description and narration.

<sup>1</sup> Other works in this group were the *Voyages of the Companions of Columbus*, and the *Legends of the Conquest of Spain*. The latter is said to have been written while the author was in Spain, but was published much later. The *Voyages of the Companions of Columbus* and the *Alhambra* were finished in England, whither Irving returned in 1829.

The most popular book of the Spanish group has been the *Alhambra*. Irving made two extended visits to the old Moorish palace from which this work takes its name, and while there collected the numerous legends which he recounts so successfully, and material for the descriptions which accompany them. The *Alhambra* has been called a "Spanish Sketch Book." It contains more narrative than its English prototype, and has a little less strength and virility of style, and more of the half serious, ironical way of looking at things which the author of *Knickerbocker* always retained.

The last two groups of Irving's writings fall outside the strict limits of the period under discussion. On his return to America in 1832 after an absence of seventeen years, there was a demand from patriotic admirers that the greatest American author should write something on purely American themes. Irving seems to have recognized clearly that his genius was best fitted to deal with the old, the romantic, and the picturesque. Nevertheless, he did, between 1833 and 1837, produce



An English cartoon of Irving.

a group of writings on American subjects. He made a journey with a government exploring party to the region west of the Mississippi and wrote his experiences in *A Tour on the Prairies*. He compiled from the papers of John Jacob Astor an account of that merchant's remarkable fur-trading ventures on the Pacific coast, which he called *Astoria*; and he bought from a Western adventurer a crude manuscript narrative which he put in shape and published as the *Adventures of Captain Bonneville*. All this is

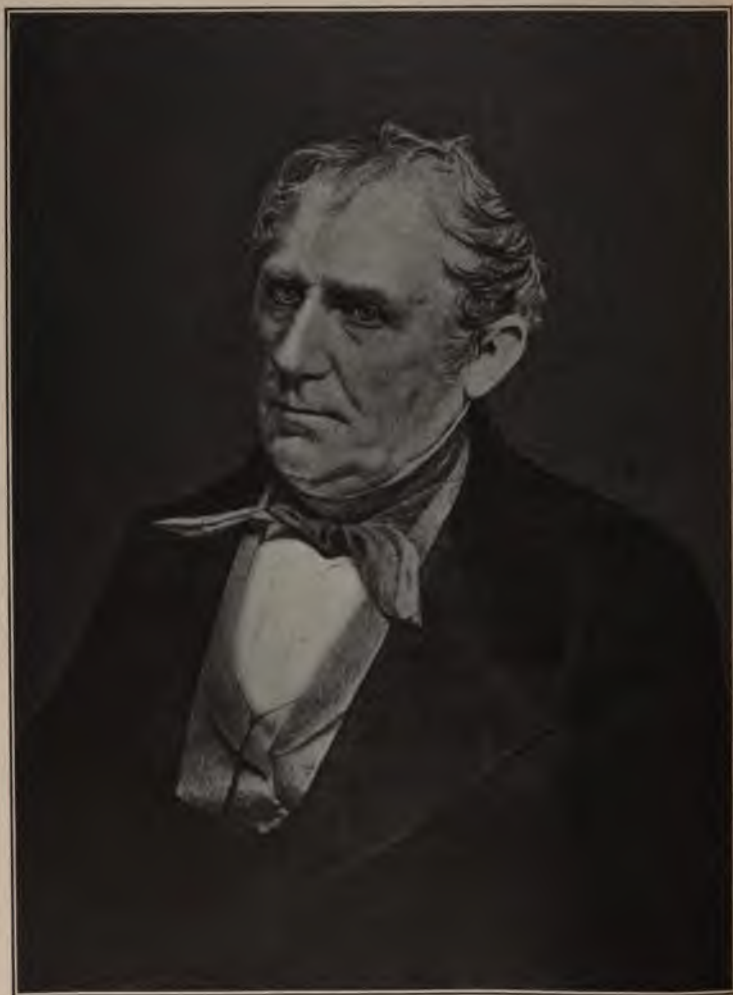


Sunnyside, Irving's home on the Hudson.

good, respectable work, readable to-day if one gets started on it, but it is the least valuable part of Irving's writings.

The fifth and last group of writings includes a *Life of Washington*, a *Life of Goldsmith*, and a *Life of Mahomet*. As a work of literature the *Goldsmith* is the best, and is indeed delightful reading, though for students it is superseded by other biographies based on more recent scholarship. The comments which have been made on the *Life of Columbus* apply, on the whole, to the *Life of Washington*.

It is proof of Irving's conscientiousness as a writer that all his work is so surprisingly uniform in quality. Practically everything that he wrote is included in his collected works, and there is nothing of which he need have been ashamed. His most important volumes are, however, *Knickerbocker's History of New York*, the *Sketch Book*, *Bracebridge Hall*, the *Tales of a Traveller*, the *Alhambra*, and the *Conquest of Granada*. If a still more restricted list were required, most readers would probably agree on *Knickerbocker's History*, the *Sketch Book*, and the *Alhambra*. Irving is one of those writers whose charm defies formal analysis. The most important characteristics of his style, so far as they can be summarized, have been mentioned in the discussion of individual works. A word remains to be said on his importance in the development of American literature. He was the first of the greater American writers of the nineteenth century, and he was the author of the first American books, with the exception of Franklin's *Autobiography*, which a cultured American need be ashamed to say he has not read. He was the first American of note to write without a didactic purpose. The important writers who preceded him, and some of those who followed him, seemed to feel that in whatever they wrote they must either teach or preach. *Knickerbocker's History*, the *Sketch Book*, and the *Alhambra*



James Fenimore Cooper.

offer us, not useful information or direct exhortation to moral or spiritual good, but only clean, refined, artistic enjoyment. Finally, Irving was the first American to win general recognition abroad purely as a writer. Both the excellence of his works and the charm of his personality did much to promote a better feeling between English and American men of letters.<sup>1</sup>

**James Fenimore Cooper.** — JAMES FENIMORE COOPER, the second of the greater Knickerbocker writers, did not come to New York City until his literary career was well under way. He was born in New Jersey in 1789, but spent his boyhood at Cooperstown, New York, then a frontier village which his father had founded. At the age of thirteen he entered Yale College, was dismissed for some misdemeanor, and sailed on a merchant vessel as a preparation for the navy.<sup>2</sup> He was commissioned midshipman in 1808. Three years later he married, and resigned from the service, and for several years lived with no special occupation except managing his estates. It was not until 1820, when Cooper was thirty-one years of age, that he wrote his first novel, *Precaution*.<sup>3</sup> This is a story of fashionable English life, of a sort

<sup>1</sup> During his long period of residence abroad Irving was cordially welcomed in the best social and literary circles of England, and was a close friend of Sir Walter Scott, Thomas Moore, and many other prominent English men of letters.

<sup>2</sup> This was before the days of the Naval Academy at Annapolis, and officers in the navy secured their preliminary training in the life of a sailor on board some merchant vessel.

<sup>3</sup> Before this Cooper had written nothing for publication, and the tradition is that he disliked writing to such an extent that he often neglected necessary correspondence. One day, while reading a dull story, he said to his wife, "I could write a better novel than that myself." "Why don't you, then?" replied Mrs. Cooper, skeptically. Cooper was not the sort of man to decline a "dare," and he began at once on *Precaution*. What is more remarkable, he finished it.

which modern readers find very dull. The next year, however, he wrote the *Spy*, his first historical novel, and followed this in 1823 with the *Pioneers*, his first frontier tale, and the *Pilot*, his first sea story. In 1822 he removed to New York. From this time until his death in 1851, he wrote almost steadily. Besides his thirty-two novels he published a *History of the Navy of the United States*, ten volumes of travels, and many miscellaneous and controversial works. From 1826 to 1833 he was in Europe, and traveled much, but in the seven years he produced seven novels, besides other writings. On his return to America, he became involved in a series of controversies with American newspapers which embittered his later years, and which had a bad effect on some of his later work.<sup>1</sup>

Cooper's best novels fall into three groups — the historical tales, of which the only noteworthy representative is the *Spy*; the frontier stories, of which the most important are the five *Leatherstocking Tales*; and the sea stories, of which the best is the *Pilot*<sup>2</sup> and the next best the *Red Rover*. Many of the

<sup>1</sup> One cause of the controversy was a quarrel between Cooper and his neighbors over the right of the public to use as a picnic ground some land belonging to the family estate. A more serious cause was found in the criticisms of America and the advice to his countrymen, which he published after he went abroad. Cooper seems to have been a good-hearted man who was wholly lacking in tact, and who had a marvelous ability for irritating and offending people when he really wished them well. It is now plain that he was one of the most loyal of Americans, but it is easy to see how editors were perfectly conscientious when they accused him of lack of patriotism, and called him a defamer of his country. Cooper brought suit against several prominent newspapers, conducted them in person, though he was not a lawyer, and won almost all of them. For more details of this unfortunate affair one must see Professor Lounsbury's *Life of Cooper*.

<sup>2</sup> The *Pilot* might also be ranked as an historical novel, since the hero is a real person, John Paul Jones.



other stories have special excellences, but most also have marked defects. Some were written with a controversial purpose and showed a little ill-temper, others were spoiled by didacticism. Of those named, all but two, the *Pathfinder* and the *Deerslayer*, were written before 1833.

The *Spy* was based on a story which the author had heard regarding one of Washington's secret service agents in the Revolution. One of the characters is recognized as Washington in disguise, though his real name is never mentioned. The scene is laid in Westchester county, New York, a region with which the author was thoroughly familiar. The *Pioneers* has as its hero Nathaniel Bumpo, generally known as Leatherstocking, an old hunter such as Cooper's father doubtless found living in the woods when he established his frontier settlement, and it pictures many frontier scenes which must have been familiar to the author as a boy. After creating the character of Leatherstocking in the *Pioneers*, Cooper wrote four other tales, the *Last of the Mohicans* (1826), the *Prairie* (1827), the *Pathfinder* (1840), and the *Deerslayer* (1841), which if taken in proper order give the life history of this hero.<sup>1</sup> The *Pilot* is said to have been undertaken to prove that an author who really knew the sea could make more of the sailor's life than Scott had done in the *Pirate*. As his hero Cooper chose the American fighter and adventurer John Paul Jones. The *Red Rover*, which though exciting is regarded by most readers as inferior to the *Pilot*,

<sup>1</sup> In the *Deerslayer*, Leatherstocking is a young man, just showing his capacity for woodcraft; in the *Last of the Mohicans*, he is the scout and hunter in his early prime; in the *Pathfinder*, he is a somewhat elderly lover, who resigns the one woman he has admired to a younger rival; in the *Pioneers*, he is the hunter already past middle life, who feels crowded by the advancing settlements; in the *Prairie*, he is the old man driven forth by the on-coming civilization to die on the great plains of the West.



Monument on site of Otsego Hall, Cooper's residence at Cooperstown.

tells of adventures on an English ship manned by American colonists before the Revolution.

In the better stories of Cooper the element of adventure is prominent. All show certain defects and certain excellences which are characteristic of the author. The chief defects are such as might be expected from Cooper's lack of early literary training, from the haste with which he wrote, and from his temperament. He is occasionally guilty of rhetorical and in a few cases even of grammatical crudities which a more careful and deliberate writer would have avoided. He failed, or at least succeeded but imperfectly, in representing more complex types of character, such as the men and the women of the cities. His attempts at humor are often unsuccessful. It is also sometimes said that his stronger characters, and especially his Indians, are untrue to life and are only bookish aggregations of virtues and vices. There is undoubtedly a certain amount of truth in this last charge, but the same fault might be found with most other tales of adventure.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Cooper's defects are perfectly obvious, but it will generally be found that the reader who is greatly troubled by them cares little for any stories of adventure. The whole question of realism and romanticism in fiction comes in here. The romanticist likes to picture his heroes as all heroic, his villains as wholly bad, his beautiful heroines as always beautiful. The realist protests that men are not really so simply constituted, that every character contains some good and some bad elements. The romanticist answers that though this is true, we all like to imagine our friends as perfect and our enemies as wholly evil. From this the two opposing schools may pass to more weighty and more subtle arguments, but at the end the question what each reader likes will depend on his temperament. Many critics, among them Mark Twain, have pointed out inconsistencies and impossibilities in Cooper's descriptions and narratives. The only possible defense is that the person who reads the story as Cooper intended it to be read never notices the discrepancies and that it is as unfair to search them out as to examine the trees and stones in an oil painting with a magnifying glass. A

It may be said to Cooper's credit that, in his better works at least, he regarded his own limitations, and attempted only the things that he could do. His chief characters, such as Harvey Birch in the *Spy*, Long Tom Coffin in the *Pilot*, and Leatherstocking are plain, healthy men of the sort that he understood well and could portray. His plots, while they may be technically weak, are simple, and usually move to an end that is inevitable. His work is always clean, and fresh, and highminded. When one thinks how cheap, melodramatic, and blood-curdling other writers have often made the story of frontier life, one can better appreciate how well Cooper handled his material. For many readers his descriptions of nature have great charm. Long descriptive passages in novels are now generally viewed with disfavor, but Cooper's, though longer than most, are so spontaneous and seem so much a part of the story that the temptation to skip them is small.

Though Charles Brockden Brown was an honorable predecessor, Cooper was the first American novelist to win general and lasting popularity. His works have been translated into many different languages, and have been read, and are still read, the world over.<sup>1</sup> In many respects he was a literary pioneer. In choice of subjects he took a hint from Scott, but Scott had little influence on his literary manner.

student — a young woman by the way — recently objected that the heroines in the *Last of the Mohicans* were represented as beautiful and attractive throughout, though women who endured the hardships of the forest for days without toilet facilities would be "perfect frights." Perhaps she was right. How many of the readers who have enjoyed Cooper's tale thought of it as they read?

<sup>1</sup> Cooper has always been a favorite in Germany, and there are several translations of his works into German. That his popularity is not confined to lower-class readers is indicated by the fact that at least two expensive "de luxe" editions of his works have appeared in Germany during the last three years.

He created three types of American novel — the historical novel, the sea tale, and the tale of frontier and Indian life. The latter, especially, has been attempted hundreds of times, but Cooper's stories still remain the best of their class.

**William Cullen Bryant.** — WILLIAM CULLEN BRYANT, the third of the greater Knickerbocker writers, also came to New York after he was well started on his career. He was born in Cummington, Massachusetts, in 1794. He spent one year at Williams College, but left at the age of seventeen to take up the study of law. When only thirteen he had written the *Embargo*, a political satire that was twice published. As literature this was of course worthless, but it shows his early development. At the age of seventeen or eighteen he wrote the greater part of "Thanatopsis,"<sup>1</sup> and at nineteen "To a Waterfowl." His first volume of poems, a thin pamphlet, appeared in 1821.



William Cullen Bryant.

Meanwhile, he had been admitted to the bar, and he continued as a moderately successful country lawyer until 1825. During this time his literary associations were mostly with Boston; but in 1825 he abandoned his law practice and removed to New York, where he became editor of a short-lived magazine, and later of the *New York Evening Post*. For more than fifty years he was a New York newspaper man, having part of the time both the business and the financial management of the *Post*. He died in 1878.

<sup>1</sup> The poem was not published until 1817. The last paragraph was written later.

As an editor Bryant did much to improve the character of newspaper English, both by his example and by rules that he

**The Embargo.**  
**JUST published, and for sale, by**  
**HASTINGS, ETHERIDGE & BLISS,**  
**THE EMBARGO:—Or**  
**SKETCHES OF THE TIMES—A Satire, the second**  
**Edition, corrected and enlarged—Together with**  
**the SPANISH REVOLUTION, and other Poems,**  
**By WILLIAM COLLIER BRYANT.**

An advertisement of Bryant's juvenile satire.

laid down for the guidance of his subordinates. He also wrote a number of creditable tales, sketches, and miscellaneous essays. It is as a poet, however, that he deserves to be remembered. He wrote poetry for more than seventy years, yet his total output was small—smaller than that of any other American poet of first rank except Poe. As has been seen, two of his best poems were written before he was twenty years of age; and nearly one third of his verse had been written before he came to New York in 1825.<sup>1</sup> The other two thirds of the contents of his rather thin volume was composed as he found time during the remaining fifty-three years of his life. It may be because poetry was an avocation, to be indulged in only when all things were favorable, that his work is so nearly uniform. He never excelled, perhaps never equaled, his two early poems "Thanatopsis"



Bryant in his earlier years.

<sup>1</sup> This estimate does not take into account his verse translation of Homer, which he made late in life as an intellectual diversion after the death of his wife. It is a very literal version, and it has some poetic excellences, but it is not one of the works on which the poet's fame rests.

and "To a Waterfowl," but he rarely failed to maintain a high standard.

As a poet Bryant was influenced by Wordsworth, and in his early years by a group of sentimental and melancholy English poets who are now almost forgotten — among them Blair, author of the "Grave" and Henry Kirke White. It was while fresh from the reading of this latter group that



Bryant's home at Roslyn, Long Island.

he wrote "Thanatopsis." The influence of Wordsworth is seen in his verse form, though he never imitated slavishly, and also perhaps in his fondness for subjects taken from nature. His attitude toward nature was, however, wholly different from that of Wordsworth. He loved the flowers and the forests, but he did not go to them for any special philosophical teaching. If he drew morals from them, it was by means of some simple comparison. Indeed, it is one of his weaknesses that his rather obvious morals often seem

to form no necessary part of the poems to which they are attached.<sup>1</sup>

Personal characteristics of Bryant show themselves in his poems. He was somewhat cold, and though not in the least gloomy or morbid he had a fondness for quiet melancholy. His favorite seasons were the winter and the autumn.<sup>2</sup> Two things appealed to him with particular force: first, nature, especially in her simpler forms, such as the woods and the common flowers; and, second, the thought of the eternal change which is always going on in the universe, and of which death is a part. Both these ideas appear in "Thanatopsis," where he shows his fondness for the quiet woods, and views death, not in relation to a future life, and not as a breaking of ties with loved ones, but as part of the great universal change to which all created things are subject. Many of his other poems show the same ideas, either singly or combined.<sup>3</sup>

Bryant's influence as a literary man was of a sort that America needed. Many of his contemporaries, as will be seen later in this chapter, were inclined to favor hurried, "inspired," poetic composition. Bryant treated poetry as a high art, to be practiced quietly and painstakingly. Even

<sup>1</sup> See, for example, "Thanatopsis," "The West Wind," "Hymn to the North Star," "A Forest Hymn," and others. As has been seen, the moralizing paragraph of "Thanatopsis" was actually written after the rest of the poem had been published.

<sup>2</sup> Among his poems with winter settings are his fairy story, "The Little People of the Snow," and his love song, beginning "Soon as the glazed and gleaming snow." Most fairy tales, and the love songs of most poets seem naturally to have a spring or summer background. For his treatment of the autumn see "The Death of the Flowers," "Autumn Woods," "November," etc.

<sup>3</sup> See for poems on nature "The Yellow Violet," "To the Fringed Gentian," "The Painted Cup," "Evening Wind," and very many others; for the idea of change see "The Past," "The Ages," "Hymn to the North Star," etc.



as a boy, while other poets were rushing into print with verses written in a few hours, he kept "Thanatopsis" by him, unpublished, for several years. It was fortunate that for at least a quarter of a century a man with this sane view was generally respected by his countrymen as their greatest poet. Unlike Irving and Cooper, he never won great fame abroad, and to-day few critics would rank him as high as some of his successors, but his position in the history of American literature is secure, and some of his poems seem as certain to endure as does any American verse. His range is limited, and he appeals to readers only when they are in certain moods, but his best work has a restraint and a calm dignity which few, if any, other American poets have surpassed.

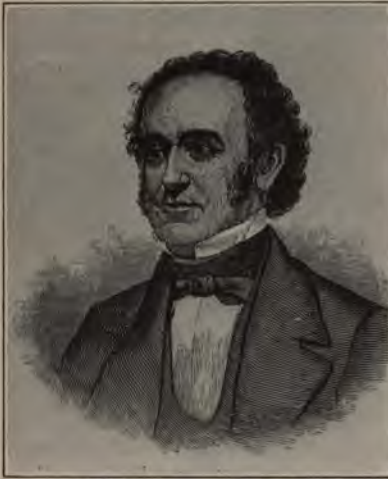


Bryant, Daniel Webster, and Irving at the memorial services for Cooper in 1852.

**Lesser New York Writers. —**

Irving, the essayist, Cooper, the romancer, and Bryant, the poet, seem sure of permanent places in the history of American literature, but most of their New York contemporaries are passing into oblivion, or are remembered only as the authors of single works. FITZGREENE HALLECK was another New Englander who was attracted to the commercial center of the country. For many years he held a clerkship in a New York business house, and made poetry an avocation. He joined with his friend Joseph Rodman Drake in writing the *Croaker Poems*, a series of clever comments on

current topics, which appeared anonymously in the *Evening Post*.<sup>1</sup> These verses are still remembered for the stir they made in their day, but most readers will find them uninteresting. Halleck's masters were Campbell and Byron, and his longest piece, "Fanny," is slightly suggestive of *Don Juan*. His best known poems are "Marco Bozzaris,"



FitzGreene Halleck.

long a favorite school declamation, and the lines on the death of his friend Drake.<sup>1</sup>

JOSEPH RODMAN DRAKE was a native of New York City, who, after suffering various hardships from ill-health and poverty, died in 1820 at the early age of twenty-five. His poetic gift was apparently greater than that of Halleck. His one poem of importance is "The Culprit Fay," in which he

tries to show that American scenes may inspire imaginative poetry, by narrating the adventures of a fairy on the shores of the Hudson River. The work is very uneven, and gives evidence of immaturity, but is highly fanciful, and in

<sup>1</sup> The gem of this poem, and probably the best thing Halleck ever wrote, is the stanza:

"Green be the turf above thee,  
Friend of my better days!  
None knew thee but to love thee,  
Nor named thee but to praise."

places truly lyrical.<sup>1</sup> Some lines of "The American Flag," once a favorite of the school readers, run smoothly, but the bombastic imagery of the poem now seems almost ludicrous.

Three New York writers of some fame in their own day are now remembered each for a single song. JOHN HOWARD PAYNE, the author of "Home, Sweet Home," led a wandering life, but he was born in New York, and belongs to that city if to any particular spot. He was connected with the stage in Europe and America, and wrote, translated, and adapted a number of dramas. It is in one of these, "Clari, the Maid of Milan," that "Home, Sweet Home," occurs. SAMUEL WOODWORTH and GEORGE P. MORRIS were both editors



Joseph Rodman Drake.

of New York journals. The former is now remembered only for "The Old Oaken Bucket," the latter for "Woodman, Spare that Tree," but other lyrics by both were once well known. Most of the songs of the early nineteenth

<sup>1</sup> Those who have access to the poem should notice the peculiar prefatory note in which Drake apparently tries, without telling an untruth, to give the impression that he wrote the poem in three days.

century were pathetically sentimental, and had an element of mild moralizing. In substance "The Old Oaken Bucket" and "Home Sweet Home" are similar to hundreds of others. These two have survived partly because they are better poetry, partly, perhaps, because they were set to taking music.



John Howard Payne.

There is space here to mention but one more of the many New York writers, JAMES KIRKE PAULDING. Paulding came to New York as a raw country boy from "up state," and many of his later writings have to do with frontier life. His early collaboration with Irving in *Salmagundi* has been mentioned. He wrote freely in prose and verse, and was especially fond

of satire. Among his writings are the *Backwoodsman*, a descriptive poem, *Koningsmarke*, the *Long Finne*, and *The Dutchman's Fireside*, novels, and *John Bull and Brother Jonathan*, a political satire.

#### NEW ENGLAND

**The Connecticut Writers.** — Connecticut had now lost its literary prestige, and was second in importance not only to New York, but probably to Boston. The successors of

the Hartford Wits seem to have inherited chiefly the weakness of their masters. They inclined to the sentimental and the didactic, and they cared more for volume and rapidity of writing than for finished production.

One of the most typical of these writers was LYDIA HUNTLEY SIGOURNEY. Her poems are moral and tearfully sentimental, and her fluency may be judged from the fact that she had a hand in the composition of forty-six volumes and contributed to periodicals more than two thousand pieces in prose and verse. It is hard to imagine anything more commonplace than her work, but it suited the taste of the time, and she had thousands of readers, not all, by any means, of the uncultured class.

JAMES GATES PERCIVAL was a far abler writer. During his lifetime he was often seriously mentioned among the greater American poets, but certain defects in his work have doomed him to a later oblivion that he does not quite deserve. He was born in Connecticut in 1795, was educated at Yale, and had a career that shows his great versatility. He was successively law student, lecturer, doctor, professor of chemistry at West Point, philologist on the editorial staff of Webster's *Dictionary*, and state geologist of Connecticut and of Wisconsin. He was an accomplished linguist, versed both in the classics and in modern literatures. Still, as a poet he was one of the extreme devotees of the theory that a poem should come by inspiration, not, like a statue or a picture, by study and patient labor. He refused to revise his own poems. The result is that his works are a mass of verse, often imitative and full of crude faults, though containing here and there bits of the truest poetry.

Among Connecticut writers was also SAMUEL G. GOODRICH, publisher, editor, and originator of the Peter Parley stories. The latter are an interesting expression of the

common feeling that no book was worth while unless it had an immediate practical purpose. They aimed to teach by interweaving facts in a fictitious narrative. Each volume recorded some rather tame adventures of some imaginary people, and introduced much information regarding history, geography, science, etc.<sup>1</sup> Seventy-five years ago probably



William Ellery Channing.

most boys and girls in the northern United States read some of these books. It would be interesting to know what they really thought of them. A generation familiar with more exciting stories finds them wholly flat and uninteresting, and prefers to take its facts and its fiction separately.

#### Massachusetts Writers.

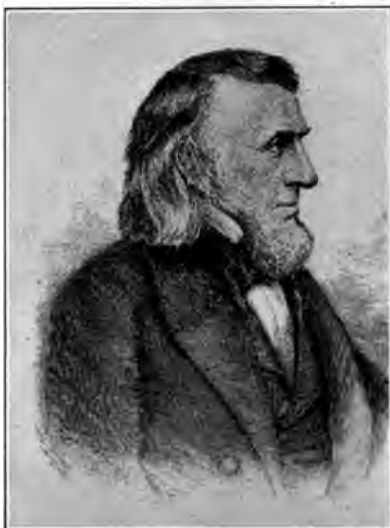
— In Boston, though little was written that takes high rank, forces were at work which had important results in the succeeding period. The

old-time Calvinism was largely superseded by Unitarianism, and Harvard College and most of the older churches passed into the control of the more liberal sect. This change was

<sup>1</sup> Sample titles are: *Peter Parley's Tales about the Sun, Moon, and Stars*; *Peter Parley's Tales about Great Britain*; *Parley's Tales about Ancient Rome*. Goodrich himself was the author of the first books in the series, but afterward he hired others to write volumes in the same style. All were published as by Peter Parley. Hawthorne wrote one volume.

accompanied by many heartburnings and much discussion. At first it drew into religious controversy men who might better have written on other subjects, but later the greater freedom probably had a good effect on literature. Before the end of the period there were some beginnings of the moral agitation against slavery which had so strong an effect on the writings of the succeeding years. In the early part of the century the Anthology Club,<sup>1</sup> an association of young men of literary instincts, did much for literature, and was concerned with the establishment in 1815 of the *North American Review*, one of the most important of American journals.

One of the ablest members of the Anthology Club was WILLIAM ELLERY CHANNING, who began his career by writing literary essays, but who became the leader of the Unitarian movement and devoted himself mostly to religious discussions. This fact has tended to



Richard Henry Dana.

<sup>1</sup> Among the members of the Anthology Club were John Quincy Adams, afterwards President of the United States, and at one time professor of *belles lettres* in Harvard; Joseph Story, the noted lawyer and jurist; Edward Everett and George Ticknor, whose service in introducing German educational methods has been mentioned.

restrict his readers to members of his own sect, and the charm of his prose is not so generally known as it should be. A more versatile writer was RICHARD HENRY DANA,<sup>1</sup> who attempted essays, stories, and, somewhat late in life, poems. Dana had much ability, but he was erratic, and too much inclined to disregard accepted standards of criticism.<sup>2</sup>

The Revolutionary group of women writers in Boston was succeeded by several authors of sentimental poems and tales. MRS. LYDIA MARIA CHILD, who was later known for her activities in the antislavery movement, began her career with two historical novels, the first, *Hobomok*, published in 1824, when she was twenty-one years of age. MISS CATHERINE M. SEDGWICK hardly belongs to the same group, since her home was in western Massachusetts. Her tendency toward moral and intellectual didacticism may be inferred from the fact that for fifty years she was preceptress of a school for young ladies. Her novels are, however, far superior to the ordinary goody-goody stories of the time. *The Linwoods*, an historical tale of the Revolution, is probably her best.

Massachusetts was the home of several orators of na-

<sup>1</sup> Not to be confused with his son, the author of *Two Years Before the Mast*. See the next chapter.

<sup>2</sup> Among Dana's most interesting writings are two weirdly imaginative stories, "Paul Felton" and "Tom Thornton," and a strange narrative poem, "The Buccaneer," in which a ghostly horse appears to punish a pirate for his cruelty.



Daniel Webster.



tional fame. The greatest was DANIEL WEBSTER, who, though born in New Hampshire and graduated from Dartmouth College, was long associated with Boston. Webster



Edward Everett.

lived well into the next period, but many of his most famous orations were delivered before 1833. In his occasional addresses, his speeches in Congress, and his pleas at the bar Webster was distinguished by a dignified and ponderous manner, which seemed especially impressive when he in-

dulged in occasional outbursts of feeling. He was a direct follower of the weightier orators of the Revolutionary time, and he had a personality and a physique that fitted well with the weighty manner. EDWARD EVERETT was also an orator of the old school, but as was natural in a lifelong student of the classics, his style was more formal, and it was sometimes over-adorned. Occasionally he suggests Burke. The speeches of Webster and Everett are examples of the older American oratory at its best, and as such they are American classics, though later tendencies are toward a simpler style of public speaking.<sup>1</sup>

**Other New England Writers.** — New England writers outside Connecticut and Massachusetts were relatively unimportant. JOHN NEAL, of Maine, was an amusing character, to whom it is hard to deny a certain amount of genius. He published novels, poems, and literary criticisms. The novels, though formless and bombastic, probably give the best evidence of his ability.<sup>2</sup> Among the most important of these are *Logan* and *Seventy-six*, the latter a story of the Revolutionary war.

<sup>1</sup> Webster's four most famous orations are his address at the laying of the cornerstone of the Bunker Hill monument, his oration on Adams and Jefferson, his reply to Hayne in the United States Senate (1830), and the "Seventh of March speech" (1850). Others, however, show his style almost equally well. Representative speeches of Everett are "The Circumstances favorable to the progress of literature in America," "Adams and Jefferson," and a Fourth of July address delivered at Dorchester in 1855.

<sup>2</sup> Neal's most remarkable characteristic was his self-assurance. He went to England, where he seems to have secured a place among literary men simply by assuming that he belonged there. In an article in *Blackwoods* he discusses his own poems, points out their faults, and concludes; "Yet, nevertheless, containing altogether more sincere poetry, more exalted, *original*, pure poetry, than *all* the works of *all* the other authors that have ever appeared in America." He also shared the American belief that hasty composition was commendable, and boasted of the speed at which he wrote.

### PHILADELPHIA

**General Conditions.** — During much of the time since the death of Franklin Philadelphia has supported creditable periodicals, and has given other evidences of much intellectual culture, but has had few writers of great distinction. This was the case during the early years of the nineteenth century. Though the city was a literary center, with especially strong influences on the South and the West, it has left few names that need to be remembered. JOSEPH DENNIE, a New Englander by birth and education, came to Philadelphia and conducted from 1801 to 1812 the *Portfolio*. His pen name was "Oliver Oldschool," and he affected the formal manner of the eighteenth-century writers. His most popular work was a series of essays known as *The Lay Preacher*. CHARLES JARED INGERSOLL was the author of the *Inchiquin Letters*. These purported to be written by a Jesuit in Washington, and were intended to offset the effect of many unfavorable letters published by European travelers in America. They were the occasion of much controversy, though at a time when international feeling was less acute they would probably have attracted little attention.

### THE SOUTH

**General Conditions.** — The South was still prominent in public affairs, and Southern statesmen maintained a high standard of oratory, though none of them quite equaled Webster. Among those best remembered in history are HENRY CLAY, JOHN C. CALHOUN, and the picturesque JOHN RANDOLPH of Roanoke. The South also contributed its share of the new biography and history already mentioned

as a product of the time. WILLIAM WIRT,<sup>1</sup> of Virginia, wrote a life of Patrick Henry which is still almost a classic of popular biography. CHIEF JUSTICE MARSHALL, another Virginian, wrote the authorized life of Washington, a thorough and conscientious work in five volumes. MASON L. WEEMS, a Virginia preacher and book agent, also wrote a brief biography of Washington, in which he apparently tried to tell, not the facts, but the things that would make the book sell. It is to Weems's fertile imagination that we owe the story of the cherry tree and the little hatchet, and other picturesque but wholly unauthenticated anecdotes of Washington.



John C. Calhoun.

In other forms of literature most Southerners worked rather for their own enjoyment than with a more serious purpose. JOHN PENDLETON KENNEDY, a Maryland lawyer, wrote *Swallow Barn*, a series of sketches of Southern life, and two historical novels, *Horseshoe Robinson*

<sup>1</sup> Wirt also wrote the *Letters of a British Spy*, which like the *Inchiquin Letters* purported to come from a foreigner in America. They were less calculated to stir up controversy than were Ingersoll's work, many of them being in reality essays on subjects in which Wirt was interested. So long as the formal prose of the Addisonian school was in vogue, they were looked on as models of style, and every American book of selections contained "The Blind Preacher" and other extracts.

and *Rob of the Bowl*. These are excellently done, with life, action, and picturesque description, though occasionally they seem the work of an amateur in letters. EDWARD COATE PINKNEY, of Maryland, wrote spirited poems in the manner of Byron and Moore. RICHARD HENRY WILDE, who came from Ireland to Georgia in his boyhood, wrote poems, mostly forgotten except one song, "My Life is like the Summer Rose." FRANCIS SCOTT KEY, of Maryland, is remembered only as the author of the "Star-Spangled Banner."

### THE WEST

For the first time in the history of America the region west of the Alleghanies began to make itself felt in literature.<sup>1</sup> At first the settlers in the Ohio valley could communicate with the seaboard only over steep and difficult mountain roads. Since it was so hard to import reading matter, ambitious Westerners determined to produce their own. Newspapers, magazines, and books were early published at Lexington, Kentucky and Cincinnati, Ohio and later in other towns. The early Western writers had been born and educated in the Eastern states, but most of them had absorbed the spirit of the new country, with its broad interests and its free, humorous outlook on life. The importance of these men comes not from the intrinsic value of anything they wrote but from the fact that they introduced a new element into American literature.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Brackenridge (see p. 67) began to write in the earlier period, but there was no considerable group of writers before 1800.

<sup>2</sup> The two most notable Western writers of this time were Timothy Flint and James Hall. Flint, a native of Massachusetts who spent some time in Cincinnati, wrote two historical romances and many essays. Hall, who got rather more fully into the spirit of the West, was born in Philadelphia and lived in Illinois and in Ohio. Besides descriptions of Western life and scenes he wrote poems and tales.

## GENERAL SUMMARY

Many of the general characteristics of this period were noticed in the introduction to the present chapter, and need not be repeated here. The most conspicuous fact was the production of a body of literature sufficiently important to command recognition abroad, and to give Americans themselves real reason for satisfaction. Equally important were the changes in the temper and spirit of the time. Over-ambitious and misdirected patriotism were still shown in some of the magazine ventures, and in some literary criticism, but on the whole the attitude toward the question of a national literature was far saner than in the later Revolutionary period. American authors gradually escaped from the absolute domination of the formal eighteenth-century writers without following the extremists of the new school in England. In the more important writings, especially those of Irving and Cooper, there was less didacticism than formerly, though the Peter Parley books and many moralizing writings in prose and verse give evidence how many persons still held the strictest ideas of the relation between literature and life. The most unfortunate characteristic of popular taste was a fondness for the sentimentally commonplace, which America shared at this time with England and the Continent. This was, however, a passing affectation which left few serious results.

New York became the literary center of the country, but the New York writers were not a school developed within the city itself, but were attracted from different places by the advantages offered by the metropolis. The Knickerbocker group was representative, therefore, not only of New York city, but of the more energetic and cosmopolitan spirit of the entire North. It is noteworthy that the three greater

men, Irving, Cooper, and Bryant, were distinguished each in a different department of letters.

New England, which had led in the literature of the earlier time, and which was to lead even more conspicuously in the next half century, was passing through a period of change. Before 1833 Puritanism had lost its hold, though its influence still remained. There was greater freedom, not only in religion, but in all fields of thought. New ideas of education were coming in, and men were discovering new interests and entering regions of knowledge of which their grandfathers had never heard, or into which they were afraid to venture. For the time being, however, the literary output of the region was relatively unimportant.

Philadelphia produced no great writers, though it was the center of important literary interests. In the South conditions changed less than in other parts of the country. The Southern gentleman clung exclusively to his Addison and his Pope long after his Northern contemporaries were reading Wordsworth and Shelley, and he still declined to enter literature as a serious profession. The settlements west of the Alleghanies introduced a new element into American life, and into American literature as well, though as might be expected, no great classics were produced in the new country.

All in all, the period of the Knickerbocker writers handed on the legacy which it had received, greatly augmented and changed for the better in almost every way. America was now ready to express herself in literature as never before.

#### READINGS AND TOPICS

*General Suggestions.* — Though literature in the Knickerbocker period is less closely associated with political events than in the earlier time, the student should keep in mind the general course of American history. He should also always remember the contempo-

rary relations of English and American literature. Discussions of the literature of the period may be found in Cairns, *A History of American Literature*, Chap. III; Wendell, *A Literary History of America*, pp. 157-203; Trent, *A History of American Literature*, pp. 187-284. See the indexes of these volumes for discussions of particular authors. In the study of this and succeeding periods it will be profitable to confine attention mostly to the chief authors, and to read the literature itself rather than biography and criticism. The best biographies are mentioned, however, that they may be used for reference and in the preparation of special topics. Biographical sketches of the lesser writers may be found in Appleton's *Cyclopedia of American Biography*, Lamb's *Biographical Dictionary of the United States*, and similar works of reference. Selections from all are given in Stedman & Hutchinson, *A Library of American Literature*, and from all the poets in Stedman's *American Anthology*. Many of the poets are also represented in Bronson, *American Poems*.

#### NEW YORK

*Suggestions for Reading.* — The standard life of WASHINGTON IRVING is that by Pierre M. Irving in four volumes. The best briefer biography is that by Charles Dudley Warner in the American Men of Letters Series. The student should aim to gain acquaintance with *Knickerbocker's History of New York*, the *Sketch Book*, and the *Alhambra*, and if possible with the *Tales of a Traveller*, *Bracebridge Hall*, and the *Conquest of Granada*. It is impossible to name the best selections from each, but the following list of suggestions may be helpful. From *Knickerbocker's History*, Book I, Chap. I, Book II, Chap. I, and Book III; from the *Sketch Book*, "The Voyage," "Rip Van Winkle," "The Country Church," "The Widow and her Son," "The Spectre Bridegroom," "Westminster Abbey," "Christmas," "Stratford on Avon," "John Bull," "The Legend of Sleepy Hollow"; from the *Alhambra*, "The Journey," "Palace of the Alhambra," "The Inhabitants of the Alhambra," "The Adventure of the Mason," "Legend of the Arabian Astrologer," "Legend of Prince Ahmed," "Legend of the Moor's Legacy," "Governor Manco and the Soldier"; from the *Tales of a Traveller*, "The Adventure of My Aunt," "The Bold Dragoon," "The Adventure of the German Student," "A Literary Dinner," "Wolfert Webber"; from *Bracebridge Hall*, "The Hall,"



"Family Servants," "The Stout Gentleman," "Saint Mark's Eve," "The Student of Salamanca," "Gypsies," "May-Day," "Popular Superstitions"; from the *Conquest of Granada*, Chaps. I, IV, XXV, XLII, LIX, XCIII, XCIX.

The best life of COOPER is that by Professor Thomas R. Lounsbury. A later biography by Mary E. Phillips is in some ways attractive. Brief selections from Cooper are of little use. Read complete romances. It is desirable to have representatives of each class — historical novels, sea tales, and Leatherstocking tales — and those who have already read some of Cooper's works should choose others of a sort with which they are not familiar. The *Spy* and the *Pilot* are the best of their respective classes. Many critics rank the *Last of the Mohicans* first among the Leatherstocking Tales. The *Pioneers* is interesting because it shows how Cooper began the series, and portrays frontier life as he himself saw it when a boy.

The authorized life of BRYANT is that by Godwin; the briefer biography by Biglow is good. The following suggested list contains representatives of different classes of Bryant's poems: "Thanatopsis," "The Yellow Violet," "To a Waterfowl," "The Ages," "March," "Hymn to the North Star," "A Forest Hymn," "June," "The African Chief," "The Death of the Flowers," "The Past," "The Evening Wind," "To the Fringed Gentian," "Song of Marion's Men," "Seventy-Six," "The Battlefield," "The Crowded Street," "The White-Footed Deer," "The Planting of the Apple-Tree," "The Snow-Shower," "Robert of Lincoln," "Waiting by the Gate," "The Little People of the Snow," "Abraham Lincoln," "The Flood of Years."

So far as time permits of readings from lesser New York authors selections may be made from the following list: From Halleck, "Marco Bozzaris," "On the Death of J. R. Drake," "Alnwick Castle," "Connecticut"; from Drake, "The Culprit Fay," "The American Flag"; from Payne, "Home, Sweet Home"; from Woodworth, "The Bucket"; from Morris, "Woodman, Spare that Tree"; from Paulding, "*John Bull and Brother Jonathan*," or any available selections.

*Suggestions for Papers and Topics.* — Biographical sketches of the chief writers may profitably be presented to the class. (For references see the biographies mentioned above.) The life of

John Howard Payne, and the literary friendship of Halleck and Drake are picturesque, though less important. The "Washington Irving Region" on the Hudson combines picturesqueness with literary and historical associations, and may be made the subject of an interesting topic, especially if pictures are available for illustration. (See Johnson, *The Picturesque Hudson*, Hubbard, *Little Journeys to the Homes of American Authors*, pp. 265-296, Mabie, *Backgrounds of Literature*, pp. 98-131; *New England Magazine*, 23: 449-469, and many other easily available references.) Many topics based on Irving's writings will suggest themselves, e.g.: What kinds of subjects did Irving prefer, and why? Irving's fondness for the old and the old-fashioned (Find evidence in his choice of subjects, in the quotations that he uses, etc.); Irving's treatment of the supernatural in his stories (How seriously does he take his ghosts? Does he make the most of his ghost stories? Can you find a way of telling "The Spectre Bridegroom" that will make more of the suggestion of the supernatural? etc. This topic to be followed by similar papers on Hawthorne and Poe, and comparisons made); A comparison between the *Roger de Coverley Papers* and selected papers from the *Sketch Book* and *Bracebridge Hall*; A comparison between the *Sketch Book* and some of Goldsmith's essays; The Alhambra (the building) and Irving's *Alhambra*.

Among possible topics on Cooper are: The life history and character of Natty Bumppo as seen in the *Leatherstocking Tales*; Cooper's Indians; The character of Harvey Birch; The *Pilot* and the real Paul Jones; The women in Cooper's tales (for Cooper's use of the word "female" see an article by Professor Lounsbury in *Harper's Magazine*, 113: 362); Cooper's use of setting; or a detailed study of the setting of one of the romances, e.g., *The Last of the Mohicans*.

Suggested topics on Bryant: The choice of subjects in Bryant's poems on nature (compared if desired with that of Wordsworth, or Whittier); Bryant's fondness for autumn and winter (illustrate by reference to as many poems as possible); Bryant's poems on death (compared, if desired, with the usual treatment of the same theme in poetry, e.g., in ordinary hymns); The religious ideas expressed in "Thanatopsis" (supplement this by finding other poems that show just what the author's faith was, and see what his biographers say on the subject); The moral lessons in Bryant's poetry (pick out definitely expressed morals).

Those especially interested will readily find topics on the lesser writers, *e.g.*: An analysis of Drake's "Culprit Fay"; The sentimental songs of New York (see references on Payne, Woodworth, Morris). The large number of writers who were editors of newspapers and magazines suggests a paper on Journalism and American Literature during this period.

#### NEW ENGLAND

*Suggestions for Reading.* — Most of the New England writers of this period need little attention from the general student. Those who wish may read from Mrs. Sigourney, "The Indian's Welcome to the Pilgrim Fathers," "Indian Names," "The Early Blue Bird"; from Percival, "To Seneca Lake," "The Coral Grove," "Night," "It is great for our Country to Die"; from Dana, "The Little Beach Bird," "The Moss supplicateth for the Poet," "Paul Felton." A twentieth-century boy or girl would find it interesting to dip into one of the Peter Parley books, if one should chance to be available. Those who have access to a file of the *North American Review* might do well to glance at one of the early volumes. Webster should not be slighted. For suggestions regarding choice of orations from Webster and Everett see footnote, page 118.

*Suggestions for Papers and Topics.* — An interesting study might be made of a Peter Parley book, compared, if desired, with the juvenile books of to-day. Webster's orations may be compared with those of the Revolutionary orators, or with those of the later period, *e.g.*, Lincoln's.

#### THE SOUTH

*Suggestions for Reading.* — The student who is especially interested in political oratory may search out for himself selections from Clay, Calhoun, and Randolph. Others might read from Wirt, "The Blind Preacher," or if time permits, the *Life of Patrick Henry*; from Kennedy, selections from *Swallow Barn*; from Pinkney, "A Health," "We break the Glass"; from Wilde, "My Life is like the Summer Rose," "To the Mocking Bird."

*Suggestions for Papers and Topics.* — A study may be made of Southern political oratory, compared if desired with that of the North; of the sentimental songs of Pinkney, Wilde, and other Southerners, compared, perhaps, with those of Payne, Morris, and other Northerners. A comparison might also be made between one of Kennedy's novels and one of Cooper's.

## CHAPTER IV

### THE PERIOD OF GREATEST ACHIEVEMENT

1833-1883 <sup>1</sup>

**General Conditions.** — The most conspicuous fact in American history during the central years of the nineteenth century was the dissension between North and South, which culminated in the Civil War, and eventually resulted in establishing the Union more firmly than before. Equally important to the student of American thought were several less obvious movements. The growing freedom of religious belief, the teachings of science, and the doctrine of evolution changed the whole view of the meaning of life. New inventions and discoveries, the increased use of the steamboat, the introduction of the railroad and the telegraph had their effect on the intellectual habits of the people. The development of the West made the aggressive frontier type of man a greater power in American affairs than he had been since the early colonial days.<sup>2</sup> All these movements were reflected

<sup>1</sup> It is hardly necessary to remind the student again that these dates marking off a period of fifty years are given only for convenience. As is usual in literary history no definite events separate this period from the preceding and the following.

<sup>2</sup> All of the Presidents of the United States before 1829 were men whose families had been of social importance, and who had the best available educational opportunities. From the accession of Jackson in 1829 until after the Civil War, they were mostly self-made men who had no special advantages of family or position. Several of them had no higher educational training, and most of the others attended small local colleges.

in the literature of the period, and although their influence cannot be traced in detail, they should be kept in mind throughout the study of the present chapter.

Early in the period the lead in literature returned from New York to Massachusetts, and although there were many important writers in other sections of the country, among them the two who have perhaps attracted the greatest notice abroad, it was the Massachusetts writers who were most highly regarded by their contemporaries, and it was they who really best expressed American life. For this reason they will be considered first in this chapter.

**Conditions in New England.** — The period from 1833 to the beginning of the Civil War was in many ways the golden age of New England. Boston had recovered from the business depression of the earlier period without, however, becoming so prosperous that the commercial overbalanced the intellectual life. While New England was thoroughly democratic in spirit, there were acknowledged social distinctions, determined in part by family, to some extent no doubt by well-earned wealth, and largely by intellectual and personal worth. The existence of a recognized group of the "best people" tended, as it always does, to establish standards of conduct and thinking, and to give stability to all the institutions of society. On the other hand the lines between classes were not so arbitrarily drawn as to cause much unpleasant feeling. As yet few foreign immigrants had come to this region,<sup>1</sup> and the New Englanders were both in blood and in thought the descendants of the Puritans.<sup>2</sup> Boston and the

<sup>1</sup> The poorer class of Irish were employed in building railroads and doing similar work. Many passages in the writings of Hawthorne, Thoreau, and others show that they were not regarded as possible members of the community, but as curiosities, as Orientals are in some places to-day.

<sup>2</sup> Emerson, Hawthorne, Longfellow, Whittier, Holmes, and

surrounding towns were sufficiently old and had a sufficiently definite tradition to escape the rawness which still clings to some Western cities where conditions are otherwise admirable; yet life was in general very simple. Bostonians were notoriously self-satisfied, but the fact that they themselves recognized this weakness and laughed over it shows that their conceit was harmless.<sup>1</sup> Cambridge, now virtually a part of Boston, was a quiet college town — if a college town is ever quiet — and Concord a peaceful country village cherishing its Revolutionary traditions. The acres of Lowell in the one and of Emerson in the other were almost surrounded by farms, yet both lived near the centers of village life. While the trolley, which now enables the tourist to “do” both places in a scant half-day, was undreamed of, yet even Concord was near enough to Boston to make possible frequent visits, and close acquaintanceship between Boston and Concord literary men. Everywhere was the thrift, the simple living, the idealism which had come down from earlier times.

By this time the New Englanders had escaped from the theological narrowness of their ancestors; most of their churches had become Unitarian, and the others were more

Lowell, as well as many of their lesser literary contemporaries, could trace their ancestry back to the early settlers of Plymouth and Massachusetts Bay. All those named were born within the limits of what was then Massachusetts, all but Longfellow within twenty-five miles of Boston, and all but Lowell in the years 1803–1809, inclusive. All lived most of their lives within easy reach of Boston, and their literary associations were almost wholly with that city. Several of them were close friends, and all of them were pleasant acquaintances, meeting often at the famous Saturday Club and elsewhere.

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Holmes, the most Bostonian of the Bostonians, says in the *Autocrat*: “Boston State-House is the hub of the solar system. You couldn’t pry that out of a Boston man, if you had the tire of all creation straightened out for a crowbar.”

liberal than formerly. During the early years of this period they experienced an intellectual awakening which Professor Wendell has very happily called the Renaissance of New England. They read widely and eagerly, not only in all departments of English literature, but in the literatures of other countries. They grew interested in music and the other arts. They responded, especially, to the teachings of the German thinkers, whose works had been made available by the group of students who were introducing German scholarship at Harvard. These new ideas were not confined to the more cultured part of the community, but were disseminated among the people through the pulpit, the lyceum lecture,<sup>1</sup> and the magazines. Of the latter, the *Atlantic Monthly*, established in 1857 with Lowell as editor and all the more prominent New England men of letters as contributors, was one of the great forces in American literature.

In a time of great earnestness, when important problems came before the nation for solution, it was perhaps natural

<sup>1</sup> The lyceum, which developed during the early years of the period under discussion, was a great educational force in New England, and wherever else in the North popular education and breadth of interests were general. A lyceum was a local literary society, perhaps meeting in a village hall or country schoolhouse, and including all members of the community who wished to attend — the minister, the school teacher, the local doctor and lawyer, and a variety of persons, young and old, from less distinctly intellectual callings. The regular meetings were conducted by the members, and consisted of debates, essays, papers, declamations, etc. At frequent intervals, however, the society listened to lectures by speakers of repute. Emerson, Holmes, Thoreau, Lowell, and other writers, many ministers, and some of the most prominent men in political life made a practice of lecturing before lyceums. The word "lyceum" is still retained in connection with popular lectures and lecture agencies; but the real lyceum, with its intellectual contact between persons of widely different position and training, and the feeling of close relationship between the members and the noted speakers addressing them, is almost wholly a thing of the past.

that the descendants of the Puritans should come to the front. Two great movements developed in connection with the intellectual awakening of New England — the transcendental movement, which was concerned with questions of theology and philosophy, and the antislavery movement, which was concerned with both ethics and politics. One group of writers devoted its energies largely to the former, another to the latter, and a third, while interested in both, was not especially occupied with either. For convenience these groups will be considered separately, though it should be remembered that the men mentioned in each were pre-eminently authors, not philosophers or reformers.

#### THE NEW ENGLAND TRANSCENDENTALISTS

**What Transcendentalism Was.** — An attempt to give a definition of Transcendentalism would lead to hopelessly abstruse discussion, but it is sufficient to know that the Transcendentalists, as the term was used in New England, were men who believed that the soul of man was of the same essence as the divine soul and hence could hold direct communion with God, and that every individual was born into the world with certain ideas which in no way came from experience. To a descendant of the Puritans, naturally, the most important ideas were those that had to do with conduct. The Calvinists had said that knowledge of what was right in conduct could be gained only from a study of the Word of God as revealed in the *Bible*. Many of the eighteenth-century philosophers had held that it was derived only from experience, either the experience of the individual, or the accumulated experience of the race. The Transcendentalists differed from both, and believed that if each man would but look earnestly within himself, his own spirit —



his own conscience — would tell him what he should and should not do.

The Transcendentalists were in no very definite sense a school, and they did not agree in a definite system of philosophy, but a few leaders of the movement held occasional meetings for discussion, and from 1840 to 1844 conducted a quarterly periodical, the *Dial*.<sup>1</sup> Several of them were also interested in the Brook Farm community, which existed at West Roxbury, near Boston, from 1841 to 1847.<sup>2</sup>

**Emerson.** — The greatest of the New England Transcendentalists was RALPH WALDO EMERSON. He was born in 1803, in Boston, where his ancestors were of the old intellectual aristocracy of Massachusetts. The death of his father, the pastor of the First Church of Boston, left the family in straitened circumstances, but he was educated at Harvard, where he ran errands for the president and waited on table at commons to help pay his expenses. His entrance into his chosen career, the ministry, was deferred by the necessity of helping to educate his brothers, and by ill-health, but at the age of twenty-six he became pastor of the Old North Church, Boston.<sup>3</sup> He held this pastorate three years, when he resigned because he did not wish to administer the Lord's

<sup>1</sup> Edited first by Margaret Fuller, then by Emerson.

<sup>2</sup> The so-called Brook Farm community was not really communistic, since its financial affairs were conducted by a regularly organized stock company, according to ordinary business principles. There was, however, an attempt to level social distinctions and to live simply and close to the soil. The Association rented a large farm on which most of the labor was performed by the working members. Among residents at Brook Farm who became more or less famous in literature were Hawthorne, Charles A. Dana, George Ripley, and George William Curtis. Emerson, Margaret Fuller, and others were frequent visitors.

<sup>3</sup> This church, during the pastorate of the Mathers the stronghold of orthodoxy, was now, like most of the old New England churches, Unitarian.

Supper.<sup>1</sup> After a visit to Europe, during which he met many distinguished men, and began his lifelong friendship with Carlyle, he settled in the village of Concord, Massachusetts,<sup>2</sup> and devoted most of his energies to lyceum lecturing. His life was outwardly uneventful until 1872, when the shock caused by the burning of his house aggravated a tendency to mental weakness that had already begun. His memory became precarious, his mind lost much of its grasp, and although he was neither insane nor an imbecile, his time for important creative work was over. He lived, however, until 1882.

Emerson began to write rather late in life. His first thin volume, entitled *Nature*, appeared in 1836, and the first and the second series of *Essays*, most of which were adapted from lectures, were published in 1841 and 1844, respectively.<sup>3</sup> His poetry came even later than the prose, the first collection not appearing until 1847.

At first Emerson lectured on subjects from natural history, English literature, and his travels, but he soon confined him-

<sup>1</sup> Much has been written of this resignation, both by those who condemn Emerson as un-Christian and by those who praise him for his conscientiousness. Emerson found that when he officiated at the sacrament it was to him a mere ceremony, without the meaning that it was supposed to have, and so long as this was so he did not wish to take part in it. He did not oppose the ordinance for those to whom it had a real significance, and indeed seems rather to have regretted that it was not significant to him. His relations with the church remained friendly, as is shown by the fact that his salary was continued for a time after he ceased to be pastor, and that later he often occupied the pulpit.

<sup>2</sup> Hence he was in later years sometimes called "The Sage of Concord."

<sup>3</sup> Later prose volumes of Emerson were: *Representative Men* (1850); *English Traits* (1856) (largely based on observations during a lecturing trip to England in 1847-1848); *Society and Solitude* (1870); *Letters and Social Aims* (1875) (compiled from older manuscripts with such aid as he was able to give); and *Natural History of Intellect* (1893), published after his death.

self both in speaking and writing to topics directly related to the conduct of life. "Love," "Friendship," "Heroism," "Self-Reliance," are titles that he gave to both lectures and essays, and when he discussed "History" or "Politics," it was with the same attention to problems of life and conduct. The *Essays* have been on the whole the most popular of his writings, but there is really little difference between any of the prose works written while he was in his prime. *Nature*, his earliest volume, is perhaps a trifle more poetical and mystical than the *Essays*, and some of the later writings are a little more formal. *Representative Men*, which was no doubt suggested by Carlyle's *Heroes and Hero-Worship*, is a series of papers on great characters in history, but Emerson discusses questions of morals and philosophy which each man suggests, rather than the men themselves. In almost all his



Old North Church, Boston.

prose he presents different aspects of the one thought that was really his message to the world — the thought that the soul of man is essentially divine, and that he who trusts his own better self thus comes into communion and accord with God and with all that is best in other men.

Emerson's prose style was individual. In his reading it was striking sentences and phrases that impressed him, rather than organized systems of thought, and his own unit of composition was the sentence. His habit was to write down single sentences or short passages on various topics as they came into his mind, and when he prepared a lecture, he worked into it these detached passages from his notebooks. The result was a scrappiness and a lack of close

coherence which became all the more noticeable when the lectures were transformed into essays. The separate sentences are, however, admirably wrought out. As Lowell says, Emerson always found the one inevitable word which exactly fitted in its place. He did not strive for epigrams of the showy kind, but in some paragraphs almost every sentence seems worthy of being quoted by itself.



Emerson as a young man.

This one defect of Emerson's style — his scrappiness — is less

serious because of his theme. The repetition and reapplication of one fundamental idea — the idea that each man has within himself an element of the divine — itself gives unity to his writings. Emerson's *Essays* should not, however, be read as one would read an organized presentation of a system of ideas. They are rather to be taken as stimulants of our own thoughts. Often they tell little or nothing that we did not know before, but they present things in a new light, and put us in the way of reaching conclusions for ourselves. Naturally, those of idealistic tendencies will gain most from the

great idealist, but most persons have enough idealism to enable them to gain something.<sup>1</sup>

Emerson should therefore be viewed as "the friend and aider of those who would live in the spirit" — to quote Matthew Arnold's phrase — rather than as a teacher of systematized wisdom. As a thinker he was characterized by insight rather than by analysis. He was hardly a student in the strictest sense of the term. He read much from many authors, especially the Germans, and he even dipped into the works of the Oriental thinkers, yet he always said that reading should be the recreation and not the serious work of a scholar. This view harmonized of course with his belief that a man found the truth within himself, and should never let others do his thinking for him.

Emerson's contemporaries felt that much of his power came from his winning personality, which, though it encouraged no close intimacies, fascinated almost every one; and something of his fine benignity is reflected in all his works. Perhaps his most remarkable characteristic, however, was his happy

<sup>1</sup> Those who find after fair trial that Emerson has no message for them need not feel troubled, but those to whom he appeals should learn how to obtain most from him. In a literature course it is often necessary to finish a certain number of pages in a prescribed time, but this is not the way to read Emerson. One should be ready to stop at any sentence, and to follow out for oneself the train of thought that the author suggests. Just what sentence is significant will depend on the thoughts that one brings to the reading, and on the problems that are perplexing one at the particular time. The same essay, when reread under different circumstances, will start wholly different trains of thought. Emerson himself says "In every work of genius we recognize our own rejected thoughts." This is frequently true in his own work. In almost every essay we find thoughts which we seem to have had ourselves without recognizing their importance or trying to express them. When we find them expressed, they become again our own, and we think them out to their conclusions.



Emerson's house in Concord.

combination of the two elements of the Puritan character, the ideal and the practical. Though he was the leader of a group of men who were often looked on as mystical dreamers, and was himself perhaps the greatest idealist of them all, he was nevertheless a sound, sensible, unassuming man. In college, though not a leader, he seems to have had some share in student life, and was known as an author of little squibs in verse and of what his biographer calls "songs for festive occasions." In later life, while always reserved, he met men of all sorts pleasantly. At literary dinners in Boston and on similar occasions he said little, but was always a gracious and appreciative listener. On the camping trips of the Adirondack Club,<sup>1</sup> which included several other men of letters, he was always a little apart, yet never in a way that made his presence seem awkward or out of place. To his farmer neighbors at Concord he appeared quite one of themselves, and many of them probably never realized his importance in the eyes of the world.<sup>2</sup>

It was Emerson's prose rather than his poems that first won him followers, but his poems have gradually come to be widely appreciated. Many of the latter present, in more imaginative form, the same ideas that are found in the *Essays*.

<sup>1</sup> It caused a little surprise when Emerson bought a gun to take on one of these expeditions, and Longfellow timidly refused to join the party, saying "Some one will be shot." But the philosopher confined himself to practicing at a mark, and "never shot at any living thing" — intentionally or unintentionally.

<sup>2</sup> After Emerson's death a farmer whose land joined his said in a manner that implied he was offering the highest possible tribute, "Mr. Emerson was a good neighbor; he always kept his fences up." Emerson always attended town meetings, and took his full share in the consideration of local problems. There are some conflicting stories as to his dexterity in doing manual labor, and his skill in managing business transactions. Every one likes to represent a philosopher as impractical, and all his awkwardnesses are usually remembered.

Emerson never fully mastered the technique of verse, and it is easy to point out rough lines and bad rhymes, but in poetry as in prose he sometimes struck out short passages that seem as inevitable as the hills. The charge of obscurity, which is brought against his poems, really holds for only a few of them, like "The Sphinx" and "Brahma,"



Emerson's grave in Sleepy Hollow cemetery, Concord.

and not for these if the reader is familiar with Emerson's philosophical ideas. On the whole, his best poetry is found in the shorter poems and fragments. Of the longer poems, "May-Day," and "Woodnotes" contain exquisite bits, but viewed as wholes seem even more disorganized than the *Essays*. "Threnody," an appealingly heartfelt poem on the death of his child, is variously rated, but to many readers it seems too personal and intense in its grief to be the highest poetry.

In estimating Emerson's rank in American literature it should be remembered that no one now living can quite realize how much his message meant to young Americans of his own time. Even those who have never read a line of his writings have received much of his teachings through sermons, and essays by other writers, and in many indirect ways, and his own works therefore seem less novel and tonic than they did when they first appeared. For this reason it may be that as years go by his



prose will be less read; but whether this is true or not he must be remembered as the man who best illustrated New England idealism guided by New England common sense, and as the most inspiring ethical teacher that America has yet produced.

**The Lesser Transcendentalists.** — Many New England Transcendentalists besides Emerson wrote, and a few are important enough to be noticed here.<sup>1</sup> The new ideas were especially attractive to men with new theories of reform,<sup>2</sup> and as few of these had Emerson's saving common sense, they often said and did strange things. Their oddities were reported and exaggerated until the word "Transcendentalist" was sometimes almost a term of ridicule. As a group, however, the lesser Transcendentalists, like their leader, were well worthy of respect.

HENRY DAVID THOREAU was one of the men whose peculiarities were magnified and misunderstood. Born at Concord in 1817, he earned his way through Harvard College, and afterward read, wrote, and explored the woods, as the spirit moved him. He became acquainted with Emerson after the

<sup>1</sup> Among those who must be passed by without comment in this brief history are George Ripley, preacher, founder of Brook Farm, and literary critic; Theodore Parker and James Freeman Clarke, preachers and reformers; Orestes A. Brownson, editor and essayist; and Christopher P. Cranch, Jones Very, and William Ellery Channing (2d), poets.

<sup>2</sup> The Transcendentalists denied that one man had any authority over another in matters of belief, and held that every individual could find the surest revelation of truth within himself. When, therefore, a reformer looked within his own heart and thought he found the message that it was sinful to drive horses, or to eat potatoes, or to kill cankerworms, no true Transcendentalist could consistently argue with him. Unfortunately, these cranks were only half-way Transcendentalists. They were indignant if any one questioned their perceptions of truth, but they were always trying to impress their ideas on others.

latter removed to Concord, and for two or three years he  
\*lived in Emerson's household, making himself generally



Henry D. Thoreau.

useful as a younger brother might do. A little later he built  
a hut on Walden pond, near Concord, on a tract of land owned

by Emerson, and here he lived alone for two or three years more. The matter-of-fact residents of Concord were unable to understand a college graduate who adopted no profession, and who, when he needed money for his few simple wants, was content to get it by odd jobs, such as whitewashing for the neighbors. Thoreau, who was not without a sense of humor, was amused at the interest which curious persons showed in his affairs, and apparently indulged in some odd freaks merely to mystify them. He was neither idle nor lazy, but he had no one dependent on him, his own wants were few, and he preferred to develop himself and to conduct his life in his own way.<sup>1</sup> While his course was not one that many men could imitate if they would, there was really nothing mysterious about it.

Thoreau was an omnivorous student, and he read all sorts of things, from the Greek poets to the most out-of-the-way local authors. But he was even more notable as an observer of nature than as a reader, and nature furnished the inspiration for many of his best writings. During his lifetime he published a few magazine articles and two books, *A Week on the Concord and Merrimac Rivers*, and *Walden, or Life in the Woods*. Since his death in 1862 his magazine articles and his unpublished manuscripts have been gathered into

<sup>1</sup> The Walden experiment has been most talked about and most misunderstood. It was really a sort of prolonged camping-out. Most persons are obliged to content themselves with a short camping time in the summer, but more than one lover of nature has wished that he might extend the experience through the year. Thoreau did this, and at the same time made some little experiments to see how simply and cheaply he could live. He was by nature rather solitary, though not abnormally so. While he lived at Walden, he went to Concord almost daily, and enjoyed visiting and receiving visits from his friends. It was only the strangers who peered around his cottage and regarded him as a curiosity that he found annoying.

several volumes.<sup>1</sup> In his own day he was not regarded very highly, but he has had the experience, rare for an American author, of growing steadily in esteem since his death, until he now takes unquestioned rank as the second of the Transcendental writers. When at his best he is a master of prose. This best is usually found in passages that record his delicate, accurate, and sympathetic observation of nature, and that show his power of finding the interesting elements in common



Walden Pond. The heap of stones marks the site of Thoreau's hut.

things. His great literary defect was the occasional use of startling expressions that are out of place and in poor taste. These are sometimes found in the descriptions of nature, but more often in the passages of moralizing and philosophizing that are common in his writings. It is in these passages that his transcendental ideas are expressed, and as he lacked Emerson's sanity and sureness of taste, he sometimes shows to disadvantage. His verses have their special admirers, but are on the whole of little value in comparison to his prose. Like all uneven writers Thoreau may be ranked high or low

<sup>1</sup>The titles given to some of the more important of these are, *Excursions*, *The Maine Woods*, *Cape Cod*, *A Yankee in Canada*.

according as the critic is most impressed by his finer passages or by the occasional cheapness and exaggeration of statement. Many readers find a wonderful charm in his



Margaret Fuller.

treatment of nature, and take more enjoyment in his work than in that of other men who, according to strict rules of criticism, must be confessed his superiors.

MARGARET FULLER, teacher, essayist, editor, and the most famous "blue-stocking" of her time, exerted such influence

in her day that she must be mentioned here, though her works are now little read. In the *Dial* and elsewhere she discussed questions of literature and art from a Transcendental viewpoint, and was much interested in the Germans, particularly in Goethe, some of whose works she translated. She was also one of the first American women to plead for



Amos Bronson Alcott.

wider opportunities for her sex. While in Europe just before her death, she became greatly interested in the movement for Italian independence, and she married an Italian, the Marquis d'Ossoli. In library catalogues and biographical lists she frequently appears as Madame Ossoli, though all her writings were first published under her maiden name.<sup>1</sup> The oblivion that has overtaken her works is due in part to the fact that the world has outgrown her views, in part to a lack of vital quality in her prose style.

One of the most peculiar of the Transcendentalists was AMOS BRONSON ALCOTT. During his long life he proposed various reforms in education, advocated a number of erratic

<sup>1</sup> "Margaret," as she was very generally called, appears frequently in the literary gossip and memoirs of the time. Emerson, who knew her well, admired her, though she sometimes amused him. Lowell execrates her both privately and in the *Fable for Critics*. Amusing passages in Hawthorne's *Note-Books* show that she was one of his pet aversions. She seems to have had a peculiar egotism, and an amazing lack of tact, so that she irritated those who knew her slightly. On her intimates, and on a wide circle of readers who did not know her personally, she made a strong and a favorable impression.

theories of conduct, founded the Concord School of Philosophy, and wrote much in prose and verse. He was the friend of Emerson and of other Transcendentalists, who esteemed him, though they agreed in saying that he talked better than he wrote. It is to be feared that he is now remembered chiefly as an awful example of the oddities of Transcendentalism. His "Orphic Sayings," a series of not very intelligible observations published in the *Dial*, attracted much attention, and called forth much ridicule from the unsympathetic.<sup>1</sup>

#### THE NEW ENGLAND ABOLITIONISTS

**The Movement against Slavery.**—The awakening of New England inspired men of an active and practical turn of mind to attack definite social evils, as it inspired those of a more philosophical temperament to become Transcendentalists. The reform which at the time seemed most needed and to which most of them devoted themselves was the abolition of negro slavery. The protest against slavery was not new, nor had it been confined to New England. During the first two generations of the Republic most Southern as well as Northern statesmen had regretted the existence of the system, and many of them had expressed the hope that it might disappear in the South as it had done in the North.

<sup>1</sup> One of Alcott's most amusing experiments was "The New Eden," Fruitlands, which he attempted to found because the spirit at Brook Farm seemed too sordid. At Fruitlands all labor was to be done by hand, since it was wrong to enslave animals; all insects were to be unmolested, since they had a right to what was necessary for their existence; no vegetables which grew underground were to be eaten, since only those which "aspired" were worthy to be the food of man; etc. Alcott's eldest daughter, Louisa M., has recorded in some of her stories the experiences of a Transcendentalist household.

Antislavery organizations were strong at the South, where the members saw both the desirability and the difficulties of emancipation. The subsequent bitter antagonism between North and South, which forced both sections to support extreme views, was brought about by complex causes, many of them economic and political. The only one which concerns us here is the crusade inaugurated by those who were so impressed by the moral evils of slavery that they refused to consider practical difficulties and questions of expediency. The majority of these were, naturally enough, descendants of the early New Englanders. At first they were regarded as fanatics, and were fully as unpopular among their neighbors as in the South. Among those who wrote and spoke most effectively were WILLIAM LLOYD GARRISON, editor and pamphleteer; WENDELL PHILLIPS, orator; JOHN GREENLEAF WHITTIER, poet; JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL, poet, satirist, and essayist; and HARRIET BEECHER STOWE, novelist. Other writers, including many who are discussed in other sections of this chapter, were interested in the movement, but those just mentioned gave so much of time and energy to the cause that they fairly constitute a group by themselves.

**Garrison and Phillips.** — WILLIAM LLOYD GARRISON and WENDELL PHILLIPS held far higher rank as leaders of the antislavery movement than as men of letters. Garrison, who conducted the *Liberator*, an abolitionist journal in Boston, from 1831<sup>1</sup> until the slaves were freed, was a representative

<sup>1</sup> The sudden change in the intensity of feeling as the slavery question became a sectional issue is indicated by the fact that just before the founding of the *Liberator*, Garrison was connected with the *Genius of Universal Emancipation*, which had for some years been published unmolested by a Quaker reformer at Baltimore. Though Garrison's radical utterances finally led to his arrest, he suffered no serious popular violence. A few years later his life would



of the humbler and poorer classes, and had received most of his intellectual training in the offices of country newspapers. He was a man of great personal and moral courage, and of infinite perseverance, and his heroic attacks for thirty-five years tortured the popular conscience until in the end they compelled action.

They were well written for their immediate purpose, but they have no literary qualities that should keep them alive after their work is done.

WENDELL PHILLIPS was in many ways a direct antithesis to Garrison. He came of a well-to-do and aristocratic New England family, and he gave up both social position and the promise of success in his profession to ally himself with a move-



William Lloyd Garrison and Wendell Phillips.

ment that was scorned by all his former associates. He remained steadfast to the cause, however, until emancipation was secured. Although not the most logical, he was probably the most moving of the antislavery orators. The reader

not have been safe in any Southern city; no emancipation paper would have been permitted in the South; and on the other hand, in Northern cities mobs, sometimes headed by clergymen, were organized to prevent officers from returning fugitive slaves.

finds his speeches clear and sometimes impassioned, but much of their power must have been due to his handsome presence and his fine delivery.

**John Greenleaf Whittier.** — WHITTIER, the chief poet of the antislavery movement, differed from the other greater New England men of letters in being descended neither from the Puritans nor from the intellectual aristocracy. His ancestors were plain Quaker farmers, who had occupied the same farm at Haverhill, Massachusetts, since 1647. He was born in 1807, and had the usual experiences of a farmer's boy



Heading of Garrison's *Liberator*.

in a family that was none too well-to-do, experiences the pleasanter features of which are reflected in "The Barefoot Boy," "Snow-Bound," and other poems. But there were less happy aspects of the life, and to the hard work and perhaps to ignorant disregard of hygienic laws Whittier owed the poor health from which he always suffered. At the age of fourteen he began to write verses, inspired, it is said, by meeting with Burns's poems. At this time Garrison was editing a country paper in the vicinity, and when one of these early poems was sent to him, he at once took an interest in the young author. It was partly as a result of Garrison's pleading that Whittier was permitted by his father to spend

two winters at the Haverhill academy.<sup>1</sup> Afterward Garrison secured for him an editorial position in Boston, and for the next five years he edited various papers and spent some



Whittier's birthplace.

time on the farm. Ill-health interfered with all his activities, and in 1836 the old homestead was sold, and he removed

<sup>1</sup> The New England academy of that day corresponded as nearly as may be to the high school of the present, though its students were usually not so well prepared, or rather, not prepared in so many subjects, as are those who enter high school now. At Haverhill Whittier studied English literature and French. He earned his own expenses for these two terms, part of them by making slippers in the evenings after the farm work was done. It is recorded that before beginning one term he made an estimate and found that he had enough money to pay all his expenses, and twenty-five cents more. He completed the term with all debts paid — and had the twenty-five cents left. This is not so admirable an achievement as writing "Snow-Bound," but to some of us it seems almost as remarkable.

to the neighboring village of Amesbury. Here he continued to reside until his death in 1892.<sup>1</sup> From the publication of his first antislavery pamphlet, "Justice and Expediency," in 1833, until the war he worked consistently for the abolition movement. He wrote much in prose and verse, edited abolitionist papers for brief intervals, attended conventions, served on committees, and did everything that his health and circumstances permitted. After the slave was freed, he became interested in other reforms, and he gave more time to nonpolitical verse.

The Quakers, who in matters of conduct were even stricter than the Puritans, were as a class opposed to slavery, but it was probably through the influence of Garrison that Whittier became active in the abolitionist movement. Before this he had dabbled in politics a little, and had shown such abilities that he was regarded as a coming man who would win a local reputation, and perhaps be sent to Congress. At this time, however, the abolitionists were so unpopular<sup>2</sup> that when he allied himself with them, he deliberately gave up all hope of personal advancement.<sup>3</sup> His devotion to the reform also

<sup>1</sup> Those who enjoy the gossip side of literary biography may find in various anecdotes of Whittier, and in several of his poems, hints of a romantic reason why he never married. There were also, probably, practical reasons. Whittier was devoted to his mother, and she was dependent on him for support. She was a strict devotee of her sect, and could never have been happy in the household with a daughter-in-law who was of another faith. Apparently the women who most appealed to Whittier were not Quakeresses; and with his straitened financial circumstances and his poor health it was out of the question for him to maintain two domestic establishments.

<sup>2</sup> Whittier had more than one experience with mob violence.

<sup>3</sup> Whittier continued, however, to use his political talents in behalf of the new movement. The abolitionists soon divided into two parties. The stricter group, led by Garrison, refused to vote or take any part in a government that recognized slavery. More practical men, like Whittier, felt that half a loaf was better than no

had a serious influence on his poetry. In early youth he had written somewhat in the manner of Byron and Scott, and had been especially influenced by Scott's narrative poems. The twelve volumes of verse issued between 1837 and 1865, though they contain much miscellaneous work, are largely made up of poems on slavery. The fact that there were twelve of these volumes also hints at one important result of his connection with a reform. He was led to write large numbers of what have been termed "editorials in verse" — poems called forth by particular occurrences, and intended to produce their effects while these occurrences were fresh in the public mind. He thus formed the habit of writing too much and too rapidly, and of publishing without taking time for revision. After the slaves were freed, he could not change the literary habits of years, though he wrote more on general subjects. To the period after the war belong "Snow-Bound," "The Tent on the Beach," "In School-Days," and others of his best known poems.



John Greenleaf Whittier.

Whittier had the limitations natural to a Quaker and a New Englander of the humbler class. He was relatively untrained in books. He never traveled, and although he was an honored friend of the other New England men of letters, and was always welcome in the social and literary circles of Boston, he lived largely among men of the class in which he was born.

bread. Whittier labored with politicians of both parties, secured letters and pledges from candidates for office, and tried to swing the antislavery support to those who for the time being promised most.

He never attended a theater, he cared little for music, and he knew little of the other arts. Moreover he gave thirty of the best years of his life to an unpopular reform, and in doing so acquired habits of writing that were not favorable to his highest artistic development. But, as a result of his early life and training, he knew and enjoyed nature. He understood men, more especially those of the simple, earnest sort with which he lived. He had the knack of story-telling which often belongs to men of his class. Above all, he had a strong, well-balanced personality — practical common sense, tact for influencing men, charity for others, uncompromising devotion to the truth. These limitations and excellences of the man are all reflected with the greatest clearness in his poems.

Most of Whittier's antislavery poems have now lost much of their interest. Still, they are among the best of the thousands of verses that the great struggle called forth. They were intense, as they must have been to arouse public sentiment, but they are never vindictive or bitterly personal. His restraint, and his habit of viewing the misdeeds of others rather in sorrow than in anger, are shown in "Ichabod," his wonderful lines on what seemed to him Webster's abandonment of a just cause. Occasionally he pictured the sufferings of the slave, as in the "Hunters of Men," but in general he tried less frequently than most antislavery poets to harrow the feelings of his readers. When he aroused sympathy for the slave, it was by showing the injustice of slavery. That he was, however, capable of indignation is shown by poems, like "Massachusetts to Virginia," which still stir the reader though the circumstances that called them forth disappeared two generations ago.

The most popular and on the whole the best of Whittier's work is found in his shorter narrative and descriptive poems,

and those in which he portrays, often with an element of personal reminiscence, the simple life of rural New England. The long narrative poems of his early years were unsuccessful, but he managed the ballad and the short narrative admirably — telling his story simply, as in “Maud Muller,” “In School Days,” and “Telling the Bees,” or with dramatic development, as in “Skipper Ireson’s Ride.” The “Tent on the Beach” follows the old plan of having each member of a party tell a story; and while the sections are uneven in quality, some of them are excellently done.<sup>1</sup> The descriptive element in the ballads is often as effective as the action,<sup>2</sup> and in another group of poems is even more important. “Snow-Bound,” the best of the latter group, is an American classic, partly because of the vividness and accuracy of the descriptions, partly because of the simplicity and the moral sweetness that pervade the poem. It has artistic defects — crudities of verse and passages of commonplace moralizing — but only the carping critic is troubled by these. The poet has brought out the finer characteristics of a life that on the surface must have been trying enough to mind and body, and one leaves the poem with a full appreciation of the dignity and independence which the simple but vigorous New England farm life produced. Whittier was naturally fond of New England subjects, and besides the rural life that he knew from experience he wrote on the Indians and the early persecution of the witches and the Quakers.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Whittier represents a camping party of three persons. He does not give their names, but they are readily recognizable as James T. Fields, the publisher and essayist, Bayard Taylor, and the poet himself.

<sup>2</sup> See, for example, the vivid pictures in “Telling the Bees,” and in “Skipper Ireson’s Ride.” The student should find many other similar passages.

<sup>3</sup> See, for example, “Cassandra Southwick,” “Mabel Martin,” “In the ‘Old South,’” “The King’s Missive.”

Whittier wrote a number of poems on religious subjects which are, technically speaking, not among his best, but which express the aspirations of the heart so earnestly and naturally that they have been adopted into the hymn books of most Protestant denominations.<sup>1</sup> He also wrote, in his later years especially, some "Songs of labor and reform," in which he honored various crafts and gave his support to various social movements. His prose, which occupies three volumes of his collected works, is good, but would hardly be remembered if it were not for his reputation as a poet. The best pieces are "Margaret Smith's Journal," a fictitious diary of a young woman in colonial New England, and a few short personal essays.

It has sometimes been said that Whittier was the most representative poet of nineteenth-century New England, and much might be written in support of this claim. He was not the most cultured, or the widest in range, or the most perfect in literary workmanship, but he showed at least as well as any man the New England uprightness, independence, idealism, and courage in attacking wrong, while his defects and limitations were themselves the product of New England life.

**James Russell Lowell.** — **LOWELL** was another writer who sacrificed much and gave many of his best energies for the unpopular abolition movement. He never devoted himself quite so completely to the cause as did Whittier, and since he was twelve years younger the Emancipation Proclamation came at an earlier period of his life. Still, he fairly deserves to be classed in the anti-slavery group.

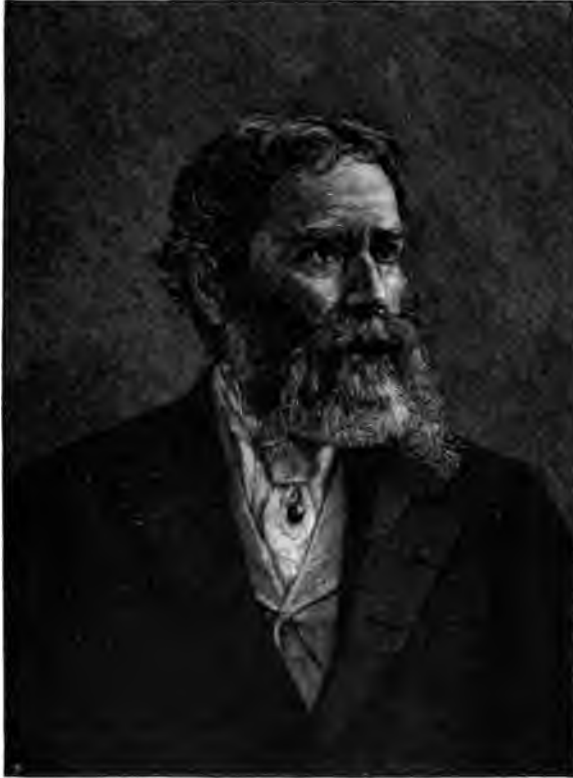
Lowell's family was one of distinction in New England.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Many hymns have been made by choosing stanzas from the two poems, "The Eternal Goodness," and "Our Master."

<sup>2</sup> The poet's family has numbered among its members the founder



His father was pastor of a church in Boston, but lived in the family home, Elmwood, on the outskirts of Cambridge.



James Russell Lowell.

Here James Russell was born in 1819. The boy grew up in the delightful social and literary atmosphere of the college of Lowell, Massachusetts, the founder of the Lowell Institute, Boston, and the present president of Harvard College.

town, and early acquired habits of reading, and literary tastes. He entered Harvard, where he was a popular, happy-go-lucky student, who did excellently well the things that interested him, but who neglected unpleasant duties to such an extent that he was rusticated in his senior year.<sup>1</sup> He



Lowell at 31.

received his degree, however, and after hesitating over other professions took up the study of the law and was graduated from Harvard law school. He practiced his profession a little, but without enthusiasm. Even while he kept his law office open, he devoted himself largely to literature, and he founded a short-lived magazine, the *Pioneer*. He had become engaged to Maria White, the sister of a college friend,<sup>2</sup> a young woman of great strength and sweetness

of character, and in 1844 he was married. His early poems had nothing to do with slavery, but, largely through the in-

<sup>1</sup> Rustication consisted in placing a student in the charge of some country clergyman, in whose family he boarded, and who acted as tutor and saw that he spent his time in approved fashion. The punishment naturally disappeared with the development of specialization and the elective system. It would now be hard to find a country minister who would undertake to give a college senior adequate instruction in all his studies.

<sup>2</sup> Russell Lowell and Maria White were the most popular members of a group of young people from the most cultured families of Boston and vicinity, mostly Harvard graduates and their sisters. It is said that after they became engaged they were accustomed to pass their letters about among their friends that others might enjoy their happiness. The fact is an interesting reminder of the idyllic conditions in which Lowell's youth was spent.

fluence of Miss White, he became an ardent abolitionist. He was a regular contributor of both prose and verse to the *Anti-Slavery Standard*, and at the time of the Mexican War he began his political satire, the *Biglow Papers*. In 1848 — a convenient year to remember in Lowell's life — the first series of *Biglow Papers* was issued in book form, and also the *Fable for Critics*, the *Vision of Sir Launfal*, and another volume of poems. Mrs. Lowell died in 1853. The husband commemorated her loss, and that of three children who died before their mother, in several of his finest poems.<sup>1</sup> In 1856 Lowell succeeded Longfellow as Smith Professor of modern languages and literature at Harvard College. The next year he was married to Miss Frances Dunlap. From 1857 to 1861 he was editor of the newly founded *Atlantic Monthly*, and was chiefly responsible for the preëminent position which that magazine long occupied. From 1863 to 1872 he was one of the editors of the *North American Review*. He wrote many essays for both these periodicals — before and during the war largely on political matters, afterward mostly on literature. The second series of the *Biglow Papers* was published in the *Atlantic* from 1862 to 1866. From 1877 to 1880 he was United States minister to Spain, and from 1880 to 1885 minister to England. In the latter position, especially, he distinguished himself by his geniality, his wit, and his success as an occasional speaker, and did much to improve the feeling between the intellectual classes of England and of America — a feeling which since the Civil War had been a little strained. He died at the family home, Elmwood, in 1891.

The reader who would estimate Lowell's works rightly must be familiar with the facts of his life, and must under-

<sup>1</sup> See "She Came and Went," "After the Burial," "The Changing," "Auf Wiedersehen," and the "Palindrome," etc.

stand his personality. In his case, more than that of almost any other American writer, the works are the expression of the man — the expression not merely of his general characteristics, but of his moods and circumstances. As a young man he was fascinating, witty, versatile, the favorite and the chief contributor of fun and entertainment at every gathering of his friends. As the hardships<sup>1</sup> and sorrows of life came upon him, he became more subdued, but he was always the same kindly, humorous man, showing with perfect openness his every mood. Indeed, his frankness was always remarkable, and he was ready to reveal his inmost heart to those with whom he felt in sympathy. As a teacher he was more enthusiastic than scientific, and he made work traditionally easy for the lazy student, though he gave much to those who wished to learn. His simplicity and his individuality were so marked that to many it seemed strange that he should have a place in court and diplomatic circles, yet it was just these qualities that made him admired in England as at home.

Lowell's work may be considered under three heads — the poems, the *Biglow Papers*, and the prose essays. As a young man Lowell believed in his own future as a poet, and put his best into his verse. There are admirable qualities in this early work, but it is imitative of other poets, and it does not long sustain the same tone. The best poems written before 1848 were those which deal with the author's personal affections and griefs, like "The Changeling," "She Came and Went"; "The Present Crisis," which belongs with the anti-slavery work; and the poems of nature appreciation and de-

<sup>1</sup> While Lowell never really suffered from poverty, he was obliged in the first years of his married life to exemplify strictly the formula "Plain living and high thinking." It is said that the first Lowell baby was rocked in a cradle made from a common barrel split lengthwise; but Mrs. Lowell had painted on one barrel head the family crest, and on the other a Latin motto.

scription, such as "To a Pine-Tree," and "Beaver Brook." The two long poems which appeared in 1848 differ widely from each other in every respect. The *Fable for Critics*, first published anonymously, shows Lowell's inveterate habit of joking, which was well known to his friends, but which, up to this time, he had not allowed to manifest itself in his published verse. There is really a "fable" of Apollo and a critic, but it is so overlaid with puns and digressions that few readers concern themselves with it. The best part of the poem is found in the short comments on contemporary writers. The criticisms of Emerson, Hawthorne, and others seem sound to-day, though in some cases Lowell was judging the authors only from their early work.<sup>1</sup> The *Vision of Sir Launfal* is one of the most popular of Lowell's poems, though taken as a whole it is hardly his best. It illustrates the New England fondness for sentimental moralizing, and also, in its history, the influence of the "inspiration" theory of poetry. It is said to have been written in forty-eight hours and its defects are such as might have been removed by careful revision.<sup>2</sup> The best parts are the descriptive passages.

<sup>1</sup> Lowell's criticism of himself follows. The most important of his "isms" was, of course, abolitionism.

"There is Lowell, who's striving Parnassus to climb  
 With a whole bale of *isms* tied together with rhyme,  
 He might get on alone, spite of brambles and boulders,  
 But he can't with that bundle he has on his shoulders,  
 The top of the hill he will ne'er come nigh reaching  
 Till he learns the distinction 'twixt singing and preaching;  
 His lyre has some chords that would ring pretty well,  
 But he'd rather by half make a drum of the shell,  
 And rattle away till he's old as Methusalem,  
 At the head of a march to the last new Jerusalem."

<sup>2</sup> The division of the poem into sections is misleading, so that many readers think that Sir Launfal really went on his pilgrimage, whereas he only dreamed of it. There are also prosaic lines, such as

"The flush of life may well be seen,"

Lowell's later poems are less obviously imitative than his early work, yet he never evolved a poetic manner that was really his own. The "Harvard Commemoration Ode," which many admirers consider his masterpiece, was read in 1865 at the services held in honor of the sons of Harvard who died in the Civil War. In this, as in his poem on the death of Agassiz, and many others, are passages that are fine both in thought and in music. There were poems on nature in these later years, less exuberant, but fully as heartfelt as those of the earlier time. There were also a number of very brief, almost epigrammatic poems, such as "Monna Lisa," which are as perfect in form as anything that Lowell wrote, though they are hardly so natural or so representative of the man as the better passages of the longer poems.

The first series of the *Biglow Papers* was begun as a protest against the Mexican War. Like many other Northerners, Lowell felt that the war was being urged by the slave interests for their own ends, and he realized that the surest way to oppose it without appearing unpatriotic or cowardly was by ridicule. He therefore contributed, first to the *Boston Courier*, and afterward to the *Anti-Slavery Standard*, a series of poems in Yankee dialect which were supposed to be written

and "For other couriers we should not lack,"

which are the more noticeable because they occur in passages of the finest poetry; and some of the figures of speech are extravagant and absurd. But it seems ungracious to point out the blemishes of work which, with a little more pains on the part of the author, might have been so fine. Popular taste has chosen the description beginning

"And what is so rare as a day in June?"

for highest approval, and this is perhaps the best sustained passage, but bits in other sections of the poem are at least as good. The student should find these for himself.

by one Hosea Biglow, and sent to the editor by his father. The imaginary author was represented as a typical New England farmer, a young man without education, but with the Yankee wit, morals, and independence. Hosea's utterances, though in dialect and full of Yankee humor,<sup>1</sup> are at bottom earnest arguments against the war and its supporters. Another character, Birdofreedom Sawin, a thoughtless and unprincipled adventurer who enlists in the army and writes letters telling of his experiences in Mexico, is treated in a spirit of broad burlesque. When the papers were gathered together in 1848, Lowell created a third character, the Reverend Homer Wilbur, a tiresome old clergyman, who is supposed to edit the papers and to introduce his own observations on all sorts of things. He also wrote a burlesque preface, and the "Notices of an Independent Press," supposed comments of newspapers, which are really ironical parodies on the book reviews of the time.<sup>2</sup> This added

<sup>1</sup> Lowell was always interested in original forms of speech, and particularly in the dialect that he heard from the country people when a boy. He probably chose this form of expression for Hosea, however, because it gave a humorous effect, and because it enabled him to say without offense many things that he could not have said in another fashion. Take, for example, a stanza from the first number:

"Ez fer war, I call it murder, —  
 There you hev it plain an' flat;  
 I don't want to go no furdur  
 Than my Testyment fer that.  
 God hez sed so plump an' fairly,  
 It's ez long ez it is broad,  
 An' you've gut to git up airy  
 Ef you want to take in God."

The reader excuses this when it purports to come from an uncultured countryman. If Lowell had mended the spelling of the stanza and published it as his own, it would have seemed vulgar and irreverent.

<sup>2</sup> "The Courtin'," Lowell's one important nonpolitical poem in

material is amusing, though there is rather too much of it, but it tends to make the reader forget the political purpose of the author, and would have been out of place in the original newspaper publication. The verses of Hosea Biglow appealed to all classes of voters, from the most highly edu-



Elmwood, Lowell's home in Cambridge.

cated man to the laborer in the streets. The satire in Homer Wilbur's pedantic essays could be fully appreciated only by the more intellectual classes.

The second series of the *Biglow Papers*, written nearly twenty years after the first, during the Civil War, and dealing with contemporary events, is on the same plan and has the same characters. It is less rollicking in its enthusiasm, the dialect poems have touches of pathos as well as of humor,

dialect, was included in this introductory material. A later version, with nearly twice as many stanzas, is found in the Introduction to the Second Series.



and they are evidently the more careful work of a mature man of letters. Critics differ as to which series is the better, but the *Papers* as a whole easily take rank as the greatest American political satire.

The prose which Lowell chose for preservation in his collected works includes one volume of political essays and several volumes of essays on literary and miscellaneous subjects. The papers included in the volume of political essays are but a very small part of the political prose which he contributed to newspapers and magazines, but they are representative of his best work of this sort. They show his patriotism and thorough Americanism, his fairness to opponents, and his habit of appealing to high motives, rather than to expediency; but since their literary qualities are those of the other essays they need not be discussed in detail.

The greater number of the literary essays were written after the close of the war.<sup>1</sup> Lowell was at his best in the discussion of the masters — Dante, Chaucer, Shakespeare, Milton. Notwithstanding the excellence of his characterizations in the *Fable for Critics*, his few essays on contemporary writers were relatively unsuccessful. This may be due in part to his habits of study and writing. In youth he formed the practice of reading and rereading the greater works of literature, and of noting on margins and fly-leaves the impressions, criticisms, and comparisons that came into his mind at each perusal. When he came, relatively late in life, to

<sup>1</sup> Many of these were first published in the *Atlantic Monthly* and the *North American Review*, and were collected into the volumes called by his publishers *Among my Books* (1870, second series 1876), and *My Study Windows* (1871). As early as 1845 Lowell had issued a volume of *Conversations on Some of the Old Poets*. *Latest Literary Essays and Addresses* was almost ready for the printer at the time of his death.

write essays on these works, he had a rich mass of material at hand. The inclusion of comments made years apart and in different moods sometimes interfered a little with the unity and consistency of the essays, but it added greatly to their suggestiveness and human interest. Lowell's essays are, indeed, the personal comments of a delightful, whimsical, sympathetic man. Other essays are better for the beginner in search of biographical information and systematic critical analysis, but to the student who already knows the author under discussion, Lowell's rambling treatment is wonderfully stimulating.

Some of the earlier miscellaneous essays are contained in the volume of *Fireside Travels* (1864), and a few others are included in the later collections. The best are the shorter personal papers, such as "Cambridge Thirty Years Ago," reminiscent of the author's boyhood days, and "My Garden Acquaintance," a delightfully informal nature essay. After his death Lowell's letters were collected and edited by his friend, Charles Eliot Norton. No American, perhaps, has been a more charming letter writer, and for one who would really know Lowell this collection is the best introduction to his life and work.

The reader of Lowell finds certain peculiarities in both the verse and the prose which result, as has been said, from his pleasingly whimsical personality. In the work which is intentionally humorous he never seems to know when to stop. Often he continues until the effect is weakened, not because the jokes are bad, but because there are too many of them. More serious is the fact that throughout life, but especially in his early and middle years, he found it hard to keep the same tone throughout a poem or an essay. In the most earnest treatment of the most serious subjects he will suddenly digress to introduce a clever pun or to turn a striking

phrase.<sup>1</sup> This is, fortunately, more rare in the poems than in the prose, though when it occurs in the former it is of course a greater blemish. The reader who has really come to know Lowell through a study of his biography and his letters not only excuses but enjoys these peculiarities, as we enjoy any distinctive and personal quality in a friendly letter. The casual reader is likely to be bewildered by them, and to get the erroneous idea that they indicate lack of earnest purpose and logical consistency of thought.

There is no doubt about Lowell's position in American literary history. As the first editor and in a sense the creator of the *Atlantic Monthly*, he performed a unique service for American letters. As author of the most successful American political satire, he had great influence on the thought of his time. Later, as teacher and as literary critic, he helped to promote the appreciation of classic literature in America.

<sup>1</sup> Lowell punned on a familiar New England phrase and on the name of a prominent advocate of secession, Governor Pickens, when he entitled one of his most earnest political essays "The Pickens and Stealin's Rebellion." In the essay on Milton he says of some commentator, "He tramples out the last spark of cheerfulness with the broad, damp foot of a hippopotamus." In the *Fireside Travels* he writes, "Milton is the only man who has got much poetry out of a cataract — and that was a cataract in his eye." Sometimes his punning allusions were too far-fetched for any but the learned. In one of his critical essays he wrote, "To every commentator who has wantonly tampered with the text, or obscured it with his inky cloud of paraphrase, we feel inclined to apply the quadrisyllabic name of the brother of Agis, King of Sparta." It is said to have taken his classical colleagues on the Harvard faculty some days of research to discover that the name of the Spartan referred to was *Eudamidas*. It is impossible by quoting these sayings to give the impression that they produce in the context. The worst — or if one has learned to enjoy them, the best — of the matter is that they turn up in the most unexpected places. They illustrate the habit of Lowell's mind which made his conversation, as a lady visitor once said, "like fireworks."

While minister to England, he did more than any other man has done to continue the work that Irving began of creating a better feeling between English and American men of letters. As to the permanency of his own writings there is more question. The *Biglow Papers* seem sure of their place, and the *Vision of Sir Launfal* and a few others promise to be popular for a long time to come. Of the other writings, both prose and verse, it may safely be said that they will be read with profit and pleasure by all who have come to know and admire the author's personality.

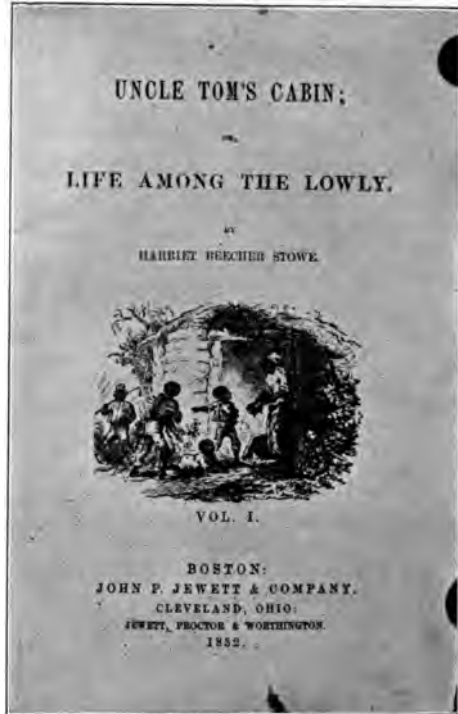
Harriet Beecher Stowe.—MRS. STOWE had many associations with the Boston and Cambridge group, though she belongs rather to Connecticut than to Massachusetts. She was



Mrs. Stowe as a young woman.

born in Connecticut in 1811, the daughter of the Reverend Lyman Beecher, a famous clergyman, and the sister of a still more famous clergyman, the Reverend Henry Ward Beecher. She lived in Boston, then in Cincinnati, where she was married to Professor Stowe, later in Brunswick, Maine, Andover, Massachusetts, and finally at Hartford, Connecticut. Mrs. Stowe was the author of many works, among

them two stories of New England life, *Oldtown Folks*, and *The Minister's Wooing*, which are especially good; yet she is always remembered in connection with one book, *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. This was written shortly after she had removed from Cincinnati to Maine, and was first published in 1851-1852 as a serial in a Washington paper. During her residence in Cincinnati Mrs. Stowe had seen something of slavery across the river, and she was inclined to do fuller justice to the pleasant aspects of the



Title-page to first edition of *Uncle Tom's Cabin*.

system and to be less bitter in her sectionalism than most of the abolitionists.<sup>1</sup> Public feeling had grown so intense,

<sup>1</sup> In *Uncle Tom's Cabin* the greater number of the slave holders are represented as being humane, and as treating their slaves as well as circumstances permitted. The most brutal man and the woman with the most unreasonable race prejudice are Northerners. The author had found that in private conversation friends in the

however, that her book aroused bitter resentment at the South, while at the North it was hailed as an effective weapon against slavery. It had an immediate success that has probably been equaled by that of no other American novel, and it attracted almost as much attention abroad as at home.



Harriet Beecher Stowe.

At first it was often characterized as a campaign document, and its success was ascribed to its timeliness rather than to its literary merit. After sixty years it is evident

that the book has qualities of its own which give it permanency.<sup>1</sup> Technically it has many defects—sensation-

South admitted and regretted the evils of slavery, and she was quite unprepared for the storm of opposition that her book aroused at the South. On the contrary, she expected that her abolitionist friends would be dissatisfied because her presentation was not seathing enough. This undoubtedly shows that she was more severe than she realized, but it also indicates the rapidity with which North and South were arraying themselves against each other. It is quite possible to conceive that most things in *Uncle Tom's Cabin* might have been written a few years earlier by a Southerner, and have aroused no particular feeling.

<sup>1</sup> Not only did the story have almost as great a vogue in England as in America, but it was translated into many languages, and is still one of the American books with which European readers are familiar. The melodramatic stage version is usually spoken of with a smile, but after all it is one of the things which every one sees. The writer has seen billboards bearing the familiar figures of Uncle Tom and Little Eva in Oxford and in Rome; and these characters are doubtless now appearing on the stage in even more remote places,

alism, poor organization of plot, and other weaknesses that are in part explained by the author's limitations, in part by the fact that she wrote it in odd moments stolen from her household duties. But with all its faults it has a human interest and an essential truth to the facts of human nature that keep it alive while the animosities of the sectional struggle are being forgotten.

#### MISCELLANEOUS NEW ENGLAND WRITERS

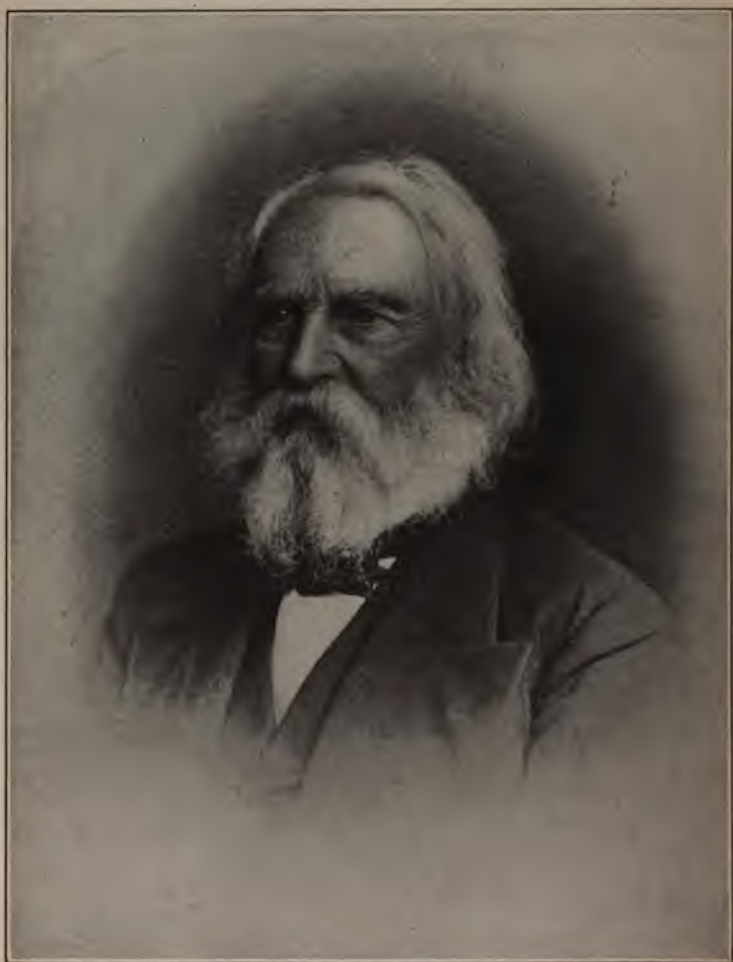
**Literary Conditions in New England.** — Transcendentalism and abolitionism were special manifestations of the intellectual awakening of New England. Such important movements necessarily touched directly or indirectly almost every thinking man; yet many of the New England writers, among them three of the greatest, Longfellow, Hawthorne, and Holmes, were not especially devoted to either, but responded to the awakening in other ways.

**Henry Wadsworth Longfellow.** — LONGFELLOW was a descendant of John and Priscilla Alden, who came in the *Mayflower*, and of other early settlers of Massachusetts. He was born in 1807 in Portland, Maine,<sup>1</sup> where his father was a prominent lawyer. He was graduated at Bowdoin College at the age of eighteen,<sup>2</sup> and his scholarship and literary prom-

where the interest they arouse is surely not due to any concern over the American political troubles of sixty years ago.

<sup>1</sup> Maine was at this time not a state, but a province of Massachusetts.

<sup>2</sup> Various stories of Longfellow's boyhood hint at qualities of the man that are reflected in his works. He was always bright and honorable. He played mostly with girls, and remained in public school but one week because the boys were too rough. There is also a tradition that he never shot off a gun but once, and that on Fourth of July's he used to put cotton in his ears to keep out the noise of fire crackers.



Henry Wadsworth Longfellow.



ise so impressed one of the trustees of this institution that he was at once offered a professorship of modern languages if he would go abroad and fit himself for the position. He had read much as a boy, and while an undergraduate had pub-



The Longfellow house at Portland, Maine.

lished a number of poems in a prominent magazine. He studied for three years in France, Spain, Italy, and Germany, and then returned to his duties in Bowdoin. His teaching was so successful that in 1834 he was chosen to the Smith professorship at Harvard — the most important professorship of modern languages in America. He went abroad again

to study, devoting himself this time to the languages of northern Europe, and visiting Sweden, Denmark, Holland, Germany, and Switzerland. Mrs. Longfellow, to whom he had been married at Portland in 1831, died in Holland after a short illness. On his return he took up his work at Harvard and engaged rooms in the famous Craigie House,<sup>1</sup> at Cambridge, which has since been associated with his name. In



Craigie House — Longfellow's home at Cambridge. Side view from the grounds.

1843 he was married to Miss Frances E. Appleton, whom he had met in Switzerland shortly after the death of his first wife. Miss Appleton's father bought Craigie House as a wedding gift, and Longfellow resided there continuously until his death in 1882, except for two or three brief visits abroad. His geniality and his domestic tastes drew to him a

<sup>1</sup> This fine colonial mansion was once Washington's headquarters during the Revolutionary War, and grouped about it are many local traditions and associations.

circle of close friends, which included all the greater New England men of letters, as well as others less famous. The most important events of these later years were his resignation from the Harvard professorship in 1854<sup>1</sup> that he might devote himself wholly to literature, and the tragic death of Mrs. Longfellow in 1861.<sup>2</sup>

Longfellow's literary career may be divided into three periods, of which the first two are relatively unimportant. During his undergraduate course at Bowdoin he wrote mostly in verse. The state of American poetry was such that his juvenile poems attracted much attention when they were published, but they are now of value chiefly to the student of the author's development. During the second period, which covers twelve or fifteen years, from the time when he first went abroad until he took up his duties at Harvard, he devoted himself mostly to prose. His only important work in verse during this time was a translation, from the Spanish, of *Coplas de Manrique*, published in 1833. During this period he wrote, besides reviews and articles on literary subjects, two longer prose works, *Outre-Mer* and *Hyperion*, which grew, respectively, out of his first and his second visits to Europe. The former shows somewhat the influence of Irving. The *Sketch Book* had been his favorite reading as a boy, and the fact that he spent some time in Spain, which Irving was just endearing to the public through the *Alhambra* and other works, may have tended to make the resemblance stronger. *Outre-Mer* shows painstaking labor, and contains good descriptive passages, but it is a trifle thin and artificial,

<sup>1</sup> His successor, as has already been noted, was James Russell Lowell.

<sup>2</sup> Mrs. Longfellow was seated in the library with her children when she let fall a drop of burning sealing wax on the light dress which she wore. Before the flames could be extinguished she was fatally burned.

as the imitative work of a young writer is likely to be. *Hyperion*, published fourteen years later, is entirely different. Longfellow gave this work the subtitle of "A Romance," and it is really a thinly disguised account of his travels in Germany and Switzerland after the death of his first wife, and of his meeting with Miss Appleton. When it was first published, some critics thought the personal references in poor taste, and Miss Appleton and her family are said to have been for a time displeased. A more serious fault was a turgid style, probably derived in part from the study of German romantic tales, and a sentimental and distorted view of life which was characteristic of Longfellow only during this troubled period, if indeed it was really characteristic of his best self then. His only other prose work of importance was *Kavanagh*, a romance of New England village life, published ten years later, in 1849.

Soon after his removal to Cambridge, while stirred by his recent bereavement, his new love, and the anxieties that naturally came from the beginning of new duties, Longfellow again turned to verse and wrote a number of short moralizing poems. These were published in the volume *Voices of the Night*,<sup>1</sup> in 1839, and were much more favorably received than the prose volume of the same year, *Hyperion*. The return to verse in *Voices of the Night* marks the beginning of the author's last and greatest literary period. For the remaining forty-three years of his life he was preëminently a poet.

<sup>1</sup> The poems retained from this collection under the heading *Voices of the Night* in later editions of the poems are: the "Prelude," "Hymn to the Night," "A Psalm of Life," "The Reaper and the Flowers," "The Light of Stars," "Footsteps of Angels," "Flowers," "The Beleaguered City," "Midnight Mass for the Dying Year." Almost every one is generally known. At first the author called several of these "Psalms," but he retained this title for but one, the "Psalm of Life."

Longfellow wrote prolifically, and only a few of his many volumes need be specifically mentioned. Next after *Voices of the Night* he published *Ballads and other Poems* (1841), the nature of which was probably suggested by his study of the old English and German ballads. His *Poems on Slavery* were written on shipboard while he was returning from a



The Wayside Inn, Sudbury.

third trip to Europe, and were published in 1842. *Evangeline*, his first long narrative poem, appeared in 1847, *Hiawatha* in 1855, the *Courtship of Miles Standish* in 1858, the *Tales of a Wayside Inn*, a collection of stories,<sup>1</sup> in 1863

<sup>1</sup> This embodies, again, the conception of a group of stories told by different members of a party. The place was supposed to be the old inn at Sudbury, to which parties from Cambridge often made excursions. The persons who are represented as telling the tales were well-known characters in the social and literary life of Boston and Cambridge.

and 1872. The trilogy of *Christus: a Mystery*, made up of the *Divine Tragedy*, the *Golden Legend*, and the *New England Tragedies*, appeared in 1872, though the second part, the *Golden Legend*, had been published separately twenty years earlier.<sup>1</sup> A verse translation of Dante, on which the poet worked for distraction after the death of his wife,<sup>2</sup> was finished in 1867. *Michael Angelo*, a long poem in dramatic form, which he had had in hand for some years, but had not finished to his satisfaction, was issued after his death. His other volumes contain some dramatic attempts and a large number of shorter poems.

With the publication of *Voices of the Night* it became evident that Longfellow was a poet who could touch the popular heart. These short "Psalms" deal with universal human emotions and experiences. They are sweet, and hopeful, and encouraging. They are written in simple meters and with simple imagery that appeals to all. Many of his most popular later poems show the same characteristics. He was preëminently the poet of childhood, and domestic affection, and of the common joys and trials that come to the young and to those whose lives have fallen in quiet places. He also showed skill in the handling of simple narrative. His ballads, and many of the *Tales of a Wayside Inn*, especially those in which there is no strong dramatic element, are effective, and *Miles*

<sup>1</sup> The three parts of *Christus* are supposed to show forth respectively the spirit of the ancient, the medieval, and the modern world. The *Divine Tragedy* is an account of Christ's life and ministry, the *Golden Legend* the retelling of a medieval tale, and the *New England Tragedies*, "John Endicott" and "Giles Corey," are dramas with the scene laid in early New England. In some ways *Christus* is the most earnest and ambitious of the poet's works, but the only part in which he was fairly successful was the *Golden Legend*.

<sup>2</sup> It will be remembered that Bryant, when suffering from a similar bereavement, translated Homer.

*Standish* is excellently done.<sup>1</sup> *Evangeline* also makes a strong appeal to many readers, some of whom rank it as his masterpiece, though the story was not an easy one to tell.<sup>2</sup> The narrative element in *Hiawatha* is good, though most readers probably remember the separate incidents and the description rather than the story as a whole.<sup>3</sup>

Longfellow was a painstaking literary worker. His studies, particularly those in the literatures of modern and medieval Europe, made him acquainted with many metrical forms, and he used a variety of these in his own work. His experiments with the dactylic hexameter, the verse of the *Iliad* and the *Æneid*, in *Evangeline* and with the unrhymed trochaic tetrameter in *Hiawatha*,<sup>4</sup> in particular, called forth much comment, and although the critics point out technical objections to the use of both these measures, the voice of

<sup>1</sup> Perhaps Longfellow did especially well with this poem because it deals with his own ancestors. Priscilla's answer, and some other details, were traditions in the family.

<sup>2</sup> In order to show the heroine's devotion the poet has made her continue the search for her lover throughout life, while the lover himself becomes disheartened and gives over his attempts to find her. It is hard to see how the plot could have been managed better. If both lovers had spent their lives in active search, the tale would have lost its idyllic character, and have become a story of adventure. As it stands now, however, the cynical reader is sometimes tempted to ask if Gabriel is worthy of being hunted for. There is an anecdote which relates that the plot was told to Longfellow and Hawthorne at the same time, and that the latter at once relinquished all claim to it. Hawthorne may have seen that the incident, though touching, offered practical difficulties to the romancer.

<sup>3</sup> There had been many narrative poems with Indian heroes, all of which had led to profitless discussion as to whether the Indian characters were truthfully portrayed. Longfellow avoided this kind of criticism by writing, not of individual Indians, but of the myths and traditions of the race.

<sup>4</sup> This is the meter of the Finnish national epic, the *Kalevala*, and was adopted because Longfellow thought it especially suited to a poem which dealt with the beliefs of a primitive people.

popular approval has been in his favor. While he was not one of the greatest nineteenth-century artists in verse, he knew how to write poems that sing themselves into the heart, and occasionally, as in "My Lost Youth," he produced strangely haunting melodies. His sense of form led him to give balance and proportion to his shorter poems. He was



Longfellow in 1860.

especially happy in a few like "The Rainy Day," and "The Arrow and the Song," in which a stanza of literal description and a stanza of figurative description are followed by a stanza of application.

Longfellow's limitations as a poet came largely from his character and mental habits. He was a reader of books rather than an observer of nature and of men, and his talent was imitative rather than original. He was greatly indebted to other poets, particularly to those of continental Europe, both for ideas and for hints of form,<sup>1</sup> and his best descriptions, such, for example, as those in *Evangeline*, are of scenes which he never visited, but of which he knew through the descriptions of others. His temperament and his habits

<sup>1</sup> Poe created a small sensation in the literary world by accusing Longfellow of plagiarism; but Poe defined plagiarism as any degree of indebtedness, and he interpreted any similarity as proving indebtedness. Longfellow was the soul of honor, in literary as in other matters, and we may be sure that he never intentionally published a line that was not legitimately his own. But although his indebtedness is legitimate, it is very great — greater than most of his contemporaries realized, because they were not thoroughly familiar with the foreign poets whom he knew best.



also prevented him from being much influenced by the great movements of the day, and from expressing himself with force. His poems on slavery leave no doubt of his position on this question, and the "Building of the Ship" leaves no doubt of his patriotism, but both are a trifle thin and academic, and though technically more perfect than Whittier's fervid utterances, they are far weaker. The poems on slavery were written relatively early, when his interest chanced to be directed to the abolition cause. The later stages of the struggle seem to have concerned him little, and the same may be said of the Transcendental movement, and, more strangely, of the great New England awakening in art. In his cleanness of thought and his moral ideals Longfellow was typical of New England, but in other respects he was less representative of his community and his age than any other of the greater American poets. To the two peculiarities already mentioned, — his lack of originality and his failure to enter into the intellectual life about him, — is due the quality of his philosophy which has led many persons to characterize it as "commonplace." "Into each life some rain must fall," "As one by one thy hopes depart, Be resolute and calm," "Learn to labor and to wait," are observations and exhortations that are true and wholesome, and that come to almost every one at some period of his life with tonic force; but to the man who has felt the doubt and despair which modern life sometimes brings they are likely to seem inadequate.

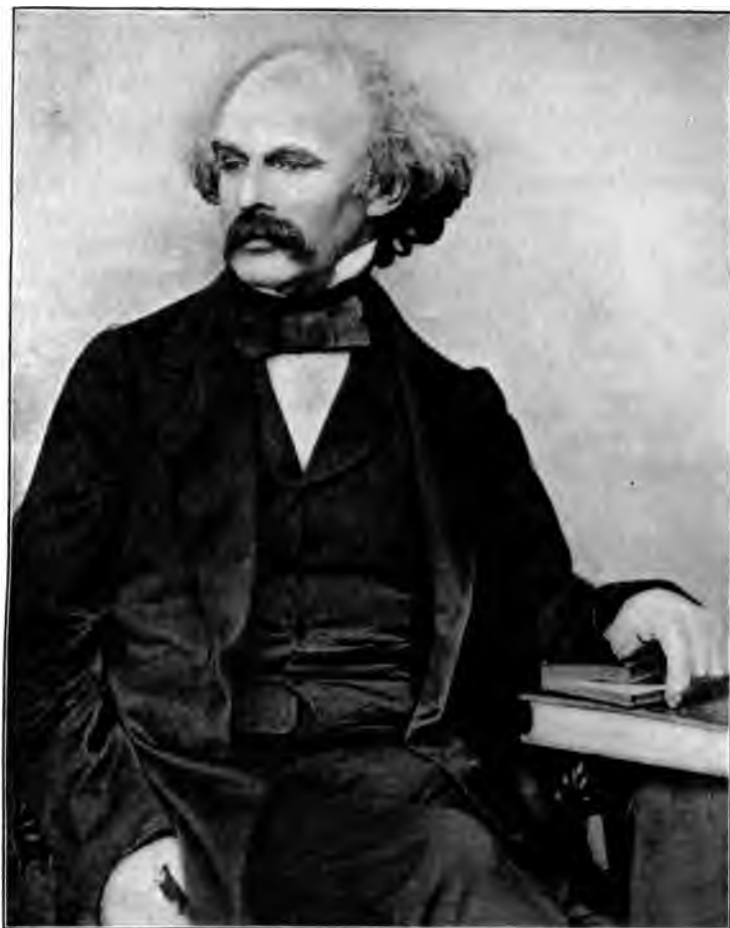
These limitations of the poet may at first seem serious, yet to recognize them is only to clear the way for the truest appreciation of his work. Like other important poets of the nineteenth century, he attempted to write dramas without having the dramatic gift; but with this exception he usually confined himself to work for which he was fitted, and it is

only fair to go to him for the things which he really offers — not for profound philosophy or novel ideas on social problems, but for hopeful, helpful encouragement in meeting the ordinary troubles of life. He has been and continues to be the most popular of American poets, at home and abroad. He is widely read in England, and his works have been translated into most languages spoken in civilized lands. Most persons except the very precocious and the very priggish have, at least at some time in their lives, found consolation and inspiration in his poems; and even those who later feel them to be commonplace can recall and enjoy the impression that they once made.

**Nathaniel Hawthorne.** — HAWTHORNE<sup>1</sup> was born in 1804 at Salem, where his family had lived since the early seventeenth century. His earliest American ancestors were men of importance, and the one who most appealed to the romancer's imagination was one of the witch judges. His father and grandfather were sea captains — sterling and respected citizens, but not men of prominence. The father died when Nathaniel was four years old, and the mother, keeping her widowhood in a manner less rare than now, lived a wholly secluded life.<sup>2</sup> In this peculiar home environment Nathaniel grew up with retiring habits, and an accidental lameness which for some years kept him from boyish sports may have helped to increase the tendency to solitude which characterized him throughout life. The family had some property interests in Maine, and he lived there for a time, and attended Bowdoin College, from which he was graduated

<sup>1</sup> The family name was Hathorne. Nathaniel introduced the "w" while in his senior year at college.

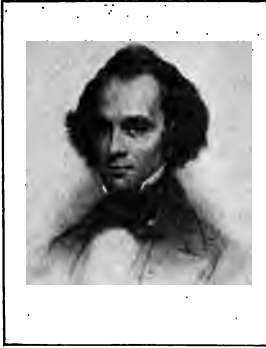
<sup>2</sup> It is said that she kept almost wholly to her room, and that for over thirty years — until her first grandchild won her from her solitude — she did not even sit at the table with the family.



Nathaniel Hawthorne.

in 1825. Among his fellow students in college were Longfellow and Franklin Pierce, the latter a close friend.

After his graduation from Bowdoin Hawthorne adopted no profession, but for twelve or fourteen years lived very quietly with his mother at Salem, doing nothing, as inquisitive neighbors thought, but in reality reading and writing.<sup>1</sup> For a few months in 1836 he edited a "Magazine of Useful and Entertaining Knowledge" in



Hawthorne as a young man.

Boston, and a little later friends secured for him the position of weigher and gauger in the Boston customhouse. He had already become engaged to Miss Sophie Peabody of Salem. Miss Peabody was an ardent Transcendentalist, and it may have been through her influence that on the loss of his position in 1841 he joined the Brook Farm community. He experienced the enthusiasms which amateur farmers

and gardeners are likely to feel at first, but he soon came to the conclusion which he expressed in a letter to Miss Peabody: "Oh, labor is the curse of the world, and nobody can meddle with it without becoming proportionably brutified." He left Brook Farm in 1842, was married, and rented the Old Manse, at Concord, where he lived for four

<sup>1</sup> Some early biographical sketches of Hawthorne tell absurd tales of this period of his life. He has been represented as a morbid recluse who never went out of doors by day, and who never looked on the sunshine. All such tales are wholly without foundation. He lived in a very retired fashion, seeing nothing of his neighbors and taking his rambles in the woods and by the sea alone, but there was nothing mysterious about him.

years. Friends again secured for him a government position, this time as surveyor of customs in his native town.<sup>1</sup> With the change of political parties in 1864 he lost his office, and after brief residences in two or three places bought of Bronson Alcott The Wayside at Concord. In 1852 he wrote the campaign biography of his friend Pierce, who was now a candidate for President. The next year Pierce repaid the favor, after the fashion of the time, by appointing him to the most lucrative United States consulate, that at Liverpool. He held this position for four years, and remained abroad, in Italy and in England, for nearly three years more. On his return to America in 1860 he again took up his residence at The Wayside, but his health was already failing, and he died in 1864.

Hawthorne's important literary work is of two sorts — the short tales and sketches, and the romances. The former were produced mostly before and the latter mostly after 1850. The greater number of his sketches and tales for adults are contained in three volumes, the *Twice Told Tales*, the *Mosses from an Old Manse*, and the *Snow Image and other Twice Told Tales*. In 1828 he published *Fanshawe*, an unimportant juvenile romance of college life, which he soon tried to suppress. With the exception of this and of a Peter Parley book which he prepared for Goodrich he wrote little except shorter pieces during his long years of seclusion

<sup>1</sup> Students should be careful not to confuse Hawthorne's two customhouse appointments. The first was to a subordinate position in the large office at Boston. Here his duties were to keep tally on the cargo of vessels, counting casks, or wheelbarrow loads of coal or salt, as they were unloaded. His second position, which has a more important relation to his literary career, was as surveyor of customs — a much higher grade, but in the smaller office at Salem. Here his duties were more purely executive, and were largely performed at his desk.



*The Old Manse at Concord.*

at Salem. He prepared two or three collections of stories for which he could find no publisher, though he sold a number of separate tales to magazines, and to Goodrich for use in the *Token*, the best of the literary annuals. These appeared over different signatures, among them "Oberon," and "The Author of the Gentle Boy" — none of them over his own name. Although many of them are now ranked among his best work, they were so little regarded that no publisher would risk a collection. At last, in 1837, a friend gave a financial guarantee, unknown to the author, which resulted in the issue of the *Twice Told Tales*.<sup>1</sup> The *Mosses* were mostly written while the author resided in



Hawthorne's study in "The Wayside."

the Old Manse at Concord, and were collected in 1846 just before he took up his duties in the Salem customhouse. *The Snow Image and other Twice Told Tales* was issued in 1851, after he had turned to longer romances, but the tales of which it was composed had been written earlier. Hawthorne was also the author of several collections for chil-

<sup>1</sup> The title of course has reference to the fact that the tales had been told before, in magazines and in the *Token*. A second edition of the *Twice Told Tales*, greatly enlarged, was published in 1842.

dren. Three volumes, *Grandfather's Chair*, *Famous Old People*, and *Liberty Tree*, which date from the period of his employment in the Boston customhouse, contain stories from early New England history. The *Wonder Book* and the *Tanglewood Tales*, published in 1851 and 1853 respectively, retell some of the old classic myths.

When Hawthorne lost his position in the Salem customhouse in 1849 he began work on another collection of short tales. It was on the advice of his publisher, James T. Fields, that he expanded the one which he had chosen for first place, the *Scarlet Letter*, and issued it in a volume by itself.<sup>1</sup> When this appeared in the spring of 1850 it was received with an enthusiasm which had never greeted the author's earlier work. From this time Hawthorne was chiefly a writer of romances. In the period of activity which followed his sudden winning of popular favor, he wrote the *House of the Seven Gables* (1851) and the *Blithedale Romance* (1852), besides preparing for publication the *Wonder Book* and the *Snow Image and other Twice Told Tales*, already mentioned. Hawthorne could write only when conditions were wholly favorable, and during his Liverpool consulate, as during his term in the Salem customhouse, he produced little or nothing; but after his resignation, while he was living in Italy and in England, he wrote his fourth important romance, the *Marble Faun*.<sup>2</sup> In his later years his health was poor, and the fact that during the troubled period of the War he was out of sympathy with most of his New England associates on political matters probably disquieted him.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Some passages still remain in the sketch prefixed to the *Scarlet Letter* which show that this was written to introduce, not a romance, but a number of short pieces.

<sup>2</sup> Published and still known in England as the *Transformation*.

<sup>3</sup> Hawthorne took little interest in politics, less than any other prominent New England man of letters except Longfellow; but he



He published *Our Old Home*, a volume of notes and observations on England. He also tried to do something more at fiction, and he completed for the *Atlantic Monthly* two serial installments of the *Dolliver Romance*, a work which up to the time of his death he still hoped to finish.<sup>1</sup>

It was Hawthorne's habit to keep notebooks in which he jotted down anything that might be of use to him in a literary way. When he traveled he often wrote detailed descriptions of persons and places that he saw, and *Our Old Home* was largely made up of such material. When he was at home his entries often consisted of hints for stories, or occasionally of bits of information gathered from reading. Selections from three series of these notebooks, the American, the English, and the French and Italian have been published since his death, and are interesting to the student of his character and his literary habits.<sup>2</sup>

The *Twice Told Tales*, the *Mosses from an Old Manse*, and the *Snow Image and other Twice Told Tales* are made up partly of short stories, and partly of descriptive and narrative sketches without plot. The short story was not, as now,

was always nominally a Democrat, and as he was abroad during the important years from 1853 to 1860 he did not change his views as many New England Democrats did. Perhaps he would not have changed them anyway. He never cared for the abolition movement, and after the secession of the South he wrote, "I rejoice that the old Union is smashed."

<sup>1</sup> Four fragments of romances, some of them dating to a time before the writing of the *Marble Faun*, have been published since the author's death. These are the *Ancestral Footstep*, *Dr. Grimshaw's Secret*, *Septimius Felton*, and the *Dolliver Romance*. All but the last named had been abandoned, and are valuable only for the hints they give of Hawthorne's methods of literary work.

<sup>2</sup> The *American Note-Books* are the most important. The student will find it interesting to go through them, pick out the hints for stories and sketches, and identify those which the author later used.

regarded as a definite specialized form of literature, and it is probable that neither Irving nor Hawthorne thought very much of the differences between their sketches and their tales. Indeed it is perhaps in the sketches rather than in the stories with plot that Hawthorne's peculiarly delicate art best shows itself. To take subjects so thin and devoid of striking features as those in "Sights from a Steeple," or "Little Annie's Ramble," or the introductory paper of the *Old Manse* volume, and to make from them charmingly readable essays is more difficult than to hold interest in a story of action. It is the stories, however, that are naturally best known. In these, as in the sketches, he succeeds in creating a peculiar "atmosphere," and often in making use of an allegorical suggestiveness that is not definite enough to be really allegory.<sup>1</sup> He is especially fond of scenes from colonial New England. The interest in his best stories frequently lies not so much in the events that happen as in the fact that a human being is placed in a peculiar situation with reference to some moral problem, or to other persons.<sup>2</sup> These stories based on situation often involve some question

<sup>1</sup> So many of the stories illustrate this quality that it is hardly necessary to give examples. Notice the suggestiveness in the "Gray Champion," where we are made half to feel that the old regicide is a supernatural guardian of New England; the symbolism of the "Minister's Black Veil"; the allegorical significance, slightly more definite, of the imperfection of the bride's cheek in the "Birthmark."

<sup>2</sup> The hints in the Note-Books show that this was the way in which he first conceived his stories. For example: "A person to be in the possession of something as perfect as mortal man has a right to demand; he tries to make it better, and ruins it entirely" ("The Birthmark"); "A person conscious that he was soon to die, the humor in which he would pay his last visit to familiar persons and things." "Dr. Heidegger's Experiment" is a study of what persons of a certain sort would do if they could renew their youth; "Rappaccini's Daughter" is a study of a human being whose touch or breath is poison to others.

of sin; and indeed the author seems to have had an especial interest in studying the effect of sin on the human soul. He was not, like the older theologians, concerned with questions of divine forgiveness or punishment, and he did not openly condemn the sinner or plead for him; he observed him in a detached, impersonal way, and studied the effects of his sin on all who were concerned.<sup>1</sup> In this particular method of treatment he was far from being a Puritan, yet his choice and handling of literary material constantly reminds one that he was a direct descendant of the Puritans. It is almost impossible fully to understand him without knowing something of early New England.

Some of Hawthorne's short prose tales are among the best produced in America, and in writing them he became fully master of his literary powers; but it was in the romances that his work reached its culmination. The characteristics mentioned in connection with the short stories — choice of New England scenes and characters, creation of atmosphere, half-allegorical suggestiveness, study of the effects of sin — are seen in these longer works. The romances have few characters — never more than four or five of importance — and interest centers in the simple situations involved. Another peculiarity of Hawthorne's narrative method is the way in which he analyzes the minds of his characters, telling their secret thoughts and moods as freely as he tells their most open actions, yet never raising a doubt in the reader's mind that they thought and felt exactly as he says.

Hawthorne often kept a literary idea in mind for many years and it is probable that he had long planned to develop

<sup>1</sup> In "Ethan Brand" the sin is that of hard-heartedness; in "The Birthmark" that of overconfidence in intellect and in the power of human knowledge; in "Rappaccini's Daughter," somewhat similarly, the sacrifice of all else to scientific knowledge, etc.

the theme of the *Scarlet Letter*.<sup>1</sup> The subject of this tale was especially adapted to his genius. The story has the early New England background and atmosphere, and it deals with Puritan practices and ideas. It is, in essence, a study of four persons whose situations are determined by their relations to a great sin. There is almost no action. As has often been said, Hawthorne begins where another storyteller would have ended — with the public punishment of the offender. He does not tell, and he does not arouse the slightest curiosity to know how temptation came to the guilty ones, or in what circumstances they yielded. He succeeds in creating an absorbing interest in the subsequent workings of their hearts, and in the mental and moral experiences of those whom their acts involve. The two chief characters differ in situation because one suffers open shame, while the guilt of the other is unknown, and he endures only the tortures of his own conscience. The most important problem of the book is really that of the use of open confession of sin. Allegorical suggestiveness is seen everywhere, particularly in the use of the symbolic letter itself. All in all, the *Scarlet Letter* takes almost unquestioned rank as the author's masterpiece.

The scene of the *House of the Seven Gables*, the second of the longer works of fiction, is laid in Salem, and the author has woven into the plot some traditions from his own family history.<sup>2</sup> One or two considerations, however, kept him from

<sup>1</sup> An incidental reference, a mention of the letter and its significance, is found in one of the early tales, "Endicott and the Red Cross." The story of finding the manuscript and the faded embroidery in the attic of the customhouse, which Hawthorne tells in the introductory sketch, is of course pure fiction.

<sup>2</sup> A curse, similar to that which the wizard Maule in the story invokes on the first of the Pyncheons, is said to have been pronounced on Hawthorne, the witch judge; and the family long believed them-

being quite at his best in the book. In the sketch introductory to the *Scarlet Letter*, written while Hawthorne was smarting from his dismissal from office, he commented on his associates in the customhouse in a way that was at least in questionable taste. Salem people sympathized with the victims of his attack, and showed their indignation, so that during the time that he was engaged on the *House of the Seven Gables* his feelings toward his native city were not cordial. In the character of the villain, Judge Pyncheon, he tried to express his scorn at the politician whom he held chiefly responsible for his removal. Perhaps it is because his bad temper interfered with the deliberate serenity of his best work that the *House of the Seven Gables* seems less satisfactory than its predecessor. Still, it is one of the great American romances, and some chapters are rarely excelled in any of the author's writings. It has the New England setting, the small group of clearly individualized characters, the evanescent charm of atmosphere, and of course a problem that has to do with sin — the sin of a proud and self-centered man visited on his descendants, as some believe in accordance with the dying curse of his victim.

The *Blithedale Romance*, the third of the longer tales published from 1850 to 1852, has its scene in a community that is clearly recognizable as Brook Farm, and some of the minor characters and incidents are drawn in part from life. It is a study of a philanthropist whose enthusiasm for his favorite reform leads him to a disregard of his duties to others, and it touches incidentally on some other problems which grew out of the social conditions of the time. *Blithedale* is the only important tale in which Hawthorne comes fully into the present and deals with the movements that were selves entitled to estates in Maine, the title to which they could not prove because of lost deeds.

agitating New England in his day. It is somewhat different in manner from the other romances, and is usually considered the least valuable.<sup>1</sup>

The problem of the *Marble Faun* is nothing less than the whole question of the use of sin in the development of character. This is the only one of the romances that has not a New England setting, and in this two of the chief characters are New Englanders. It reflects the author's experiences in Italy — reflects them so fully that it has been called a good guide book to Rome. This characterization was doubtless intended as a compliment, yet a romance and a guide book are very different, and a good guide book is very unlikely to be a good romance. The detailed descriptions of Roman scenes, pictures, and statues, and the symbolism and evanescent suggestiveness, to which the Italian setting was favorable, combine to obscure the action if not the problem. The book is more variously estimated than any of the other romances. It is a work that once read is never forgotten, and in some respects is most representative of Hawthorne's peculiar genius; but it lacks somewhat in clearness and definiteness of impression.

Though Hawthorne's work is read abroad, he never attained quite so great a foreign reputation as some of his contemporaries. This may be due in part to the fact that he was so fully representative of what was most subtle in New England character. He was little affected by the New England in which he actually lived — the New England of abolitionism, and Transcendentalism, and awakened interest in art and literature. Neither was he much influenced by the more

<sup>1</sup> The author of this book must confess that he is inclined to rank it higher, perhaps next after the *Scarlet Letter*; but the student will be wise to accept the general judgment — with a mental reservation if he chooses — until he is able to read all the romances and form his own opinion.

obvious aspects of the older Puritanism. He cared little for formal theology or religious observance. He was, however, imbued with the mystical, brooding spirit which has always been found in New England, and which was perhaps the most valuable characteristic that the Puritan had to bequeath to the man of letters. Moreover, he made himself, during his long and secluded apprenticeship, one of the greatest American masters of prose, so that in the kind of fiction which he attempted he is without a rival in either spirit or form.

**Oliver Wendell Holmes.** — HOLMES, though not the youngest of the greater New England group, was the last to win literary reputation, and the last to die. He was born in Boston in 1809, and was related on both his father's and his mother's side to some of the distinguished families of New England. His father was one of the few remaining Calvinistic clergymen, and he was brought up with strictness, though he soon repudiated his father's theological beliefs. He was graduated from Harvard with the class of 1829, and studied medicine in Boston and for two years in Paris. He practiced with moderate success in his native city, and in 1847 became professor of anatomy in the Harvard Medical School, a position that he held for thirty-five years.<sup>1</sup> He established himself in a pleasant house on Beacon Street, one of the most quiet and conservatively aristocratic residence thoroughfares of Boston, where he lived a full and active but outwardly uneventful life until 1894.

<sup>1</sup> There is an old story that the young doctor's announcement "The smallest fevers gratefully received," and similar flippancies, interfered with his success where dignity and a continued air of somber wisdom were expected of a physician. His wit was no disadvantage, however, in his lectures to medical students. He was given the last lecture period in the morning because he was said to be the member of the faculty who could best hold the attention of the class at that hour.

The important part of Holmes's literary career did not begin until 1857, when he contributed the *Autocrat of the Breakfast-Table* to the first volume of the *Atlantic Monthly*.<sup>1</sup>



Oliver Wendell Holmes.

He had, it is true, written more or less since the beginning of his college days. Among his early poems were "Ol

<sup>1</sup> He had published two papers bearing this title in the *New England Magazine* more than twenty years before. These are not his best vein, and have never been reprinted; but he recognizes their existence by beginning his first paper in the *Atlantic*, "As was saying when I was interrupted."



Ironsides," his impassioned protest against the destruction of the frigate *Constitution*, and "The Last Leaf"; but the greater part of his writings before he was forty-eight years of age were relatively unimportant verses, many of them humorous, and prose essays on medical and related subjects. He had, however, won a reputation as a brilliant conversationalist, and it may have been this which led Lowell to insist that he contribute informal essays to the new magazine. The *Autocrat* was followed immediately by another series, the *Professor at the Breakfast-Table*, and this by his first novel, *Elsie Venner*.<sup>1</sup> Later he wrote two more novels, *The Guardian Angel* and *A Mortal Antipathy*, as well as *The Poet at the Breakfast-Table*, and a sort of epilogue to the *Breakfast-Table* series, *Over the Tea-Cups*. All these were first published in the *Atlantic*.

Holmes's writings all show the traits of his personality. He was a man of wide interests, always alive to all that was going on about him. His New England ancestry, and particularly the position that his father had occupied, attracted him to theological and ethical problems, and his profession kept him awake to developments in scientific thought. He had the traditional Yankee ingenuity and fondness for dabbling in many things.<sup>2</sup> He had a strong sense of humor and a clever wit. He was politically and socially a conservative, and while he was always on the side of humanity in moral questions, he was irritated by the extreme reformers that he found about him. In literature he had the tastes of an old-fashioned gentleman. More than almost any of his con-

<sup>1</sup> This appeared in the *Atlantic* as *The Professor's Story*.

<sup>2</sup> He was an enthusiastic amateur photographer when every operator must mix his own chemicals, sensitize his own plate, and develop it before it had time to dry; and he invented the ordinary hand stereoscope. The same spirit was shown in a different way when, rather late in life, he undertook to learn to play the violin.

temporaries he was influenced by the more formal and restrained English writers of the eighteenth century.

In the poems this old-fashioned quality is shown both in the verse form and in the choice of subjects. Like Pope and his followers he wrote "metrical essays," — discussions of morals, manners, and beliefs in cleverly turned heroic couplets. His shorter poems with more lyric movement are also in the old-fashioned quiet manner.<sup>1</sup> Even the humorous



Homestead of Oliver Wendell Holmes.

poems are restrained and free from the extravagance and exaggeration that characterize so much American funny verse. Still better than the wholly humorous poems are those that blend humor and pathos.<sup>2</sup> One of these is "The Last

<sup>1</sup> In a good-natured letter to Lowell, Holmes objected to what he called "the rattley-bang sort of verse" in which the *Vision of Sir Launfal* is written.

<sup>2</sup> Notice that the humor and pathos are really blended, not as is

Leaf," probably the best of his early poems. In "The Deacon's Masterpiece," commonly known as "The One Hoss Shay," there is no pathos, but there is a strong element of wisdom and common sense. Somewhat similar but more whimsical is "The Broomstick Train," published in *Over the Tea-Cups* — a wonderfully fresh and lively piece of work for a man of eighty. Perhaps the best known of the wholly serious poems is "The Chambered Nautilus," which, like "The Deacon's Masterpiece," first appeared in the *Autocrat*. This is almost perfect in form, and has a touch of old-fashioned sentiment and moralizing very characteristic of the author. Holmes was especially successful as a writer of poems for special occasions. Among the best of these are those read at successive reunions of the Harvard class of 1829. The two most generally known are "Bill and Joe," and "The Boys."

Holmes's important prose work is of two sorts — the informal essays and the novels. The former are contained in the *Breakfast-Table* series and *Over the Tea-Cups*. The three volumes of the *Breakfast-Table* series repeat respectively the sayings of the *Autocrat*, the Professor, and the Poet at the breakfast table of a middle-class boarding house in Boston. The other characters, whose comments and replies form a setting for the remarks of the chief speaker, are as diverse a company as might be expected at such a place. These persons are lightly sketched, but they seem very real, and their doings furnish a slight thread of narration to bind the whole together. The rambling talk of the breakfast table enables Holmes to show his wide interest in all sorts of things. The sudden transitions are well managed, and the continued variety gives an impression very like that actually

often the case, merely mixed. It is impossible to classify some stanzas of the poem as either humorous or pathetic. They are both at the same time.

produced by brilliant conversation. Among the author's hobbies, if he may be said to have any, are his dislike to some of the older doctrines of moral responsibility, and his recognition of heredity as a force which determines not only physical but mental and moral characteristics. He was almost the only prominent New England writer who paid



An English caricature of Dr. Holmes.

much attention to the discoveries and theories of modern science in his discussion of philosophical problems. Still, the essays are far from being over-serious. The conversation at the breakfast table ranged all the way from weighty and abstract questions to matters of dress and the gossip of the race track.<sup>1</sup> The *Autocrat* is the best of the series, perhaps because it contained brilliant sayings that the author had been accumulating for years. The next best is probably the *Poet*. *Over the Tea-Cups* is one of the most delightful books that ever came from the pen of a man of eighty. It shows that even at this

age Holmes had lost none of his powers or his breadth of interest, but it is

written, as he says, especially for his old friends, and taken by itself is not quite so good as the earlier work.

The first two novels, *Elsie Venner* and *The Guardian Angel* were written with the obvious purpose of showing how heredity affects moral responsibility.<sup>2</sup> *Elsie Venner*

<sup>1</sup> It will be well worth while for the student to make a list of the topics discussed in any ten pages of the *Autocrat*, and to notice not only their number, but their diversity.

<sup>2</sup> Dr. Holmes's view, which he more than once presents, may be briefly stated thus: We do not blame one man for being physically

is the stronger, and on the whole the better, though in some ways *The Guardian Angel* is even more delightful. Holmes's taste was old-fashioned in fiction as in other forms of literature, and his stories have the stock characters of hero, heroine, and villain, and a touch of romantic sentimentality, though the problem that each propounds keeps them from being in the least commonplace. *A Mortal Antipathy*, a study in abnormal psychology, is more rambling in plan, and less convincing.<sup>1</sup> Holmes's other prose works include some medical and miscellaneous essays, biographies of Motley and of Emerson, and a volume on his visit to England in his seventy-eighth year.

Notwithstanding his breadth of interests Holmes was in some respects a provincial writer. None of his prominent contemporaries except Whittier spent so little time outside

smaller or weaker than another, or even for being physically deformed, and we expect less strenuous labor from the weak and deformed man than from the strong one. Why should we expect from the man who is born with a weak or perverted moral nature the same moral achievement that we require of one morally strong? It should be remembered, however, that when the *Autocrat* and *Elsie Venner* were written the idea of individual responsibility for one's actions was still as strong in New England as it had been in the days of Calvinism. Dr. Holmes was a conservative, and he would almost certainly have objected to the views of modern sociologists who go to the other extreme, treat sin as a disease, lay the blame of all moral shortcomings on society, and free the sinner from all responsibility.

<sup>1</sup> The story of this amusing book is that of a young man who had been dropped by a pretty nursemaid when an infant, and who, as a result of the shock, had an uncontrollable antipathy to all pretty girls — an unreasoning antipathy similar to that which some persons feel when they see a snake. This state of affairs is ended by a countershock, when the hero, helplessly ill, is rescued from a burning house by another pretty girl. We are ready to accept Dr. Holmes's assurance that medical annals show such an affliction and such a cure to be possible; but so few young men are afflicted in this way that the story hardly seems plausible.

New England; and his view was always that of his neighborhood and his social class. He represented the intellectual and social aristocracy which he himself wittily called the "Brahmin caste of New England."<sup>1</sup> Still, he was as wide in his sympathies as in his intellectual interests, and he was in no degree a snob. He showed at its best the sort of American humor which develops from culture, as distinguished from that which embodies the breadth and the freedom of more primitive life.<sup>2</sup> His writings, like those of Irving, always remind the reader that they are the work of a gentleman; and though he was more brilliant and less winningly genial than Irving, his wit and satire rarely offend. He was neither the greatest poet nor the greatest essayist of his group, but to many readers he is the most delightful.

**The New England Group.** — Emerson, Whittier, Lowell, Longfellow, Hawthorne, and Holmes were the chief members of the most distinguished group of authors that America has yet produced. All these were natives and true sons of New England, they were all personal friends, they contributed to the same periodicals, and were related in many ways. Closely associated with them were many other authors who lived in the neighborhood of Boston and Cambridge. There were also writers in other parts of New England whose connection with the central group was more or less remote. Many of these showed great excellences in certain directions, but none of them can claim to rank with the six masters. Thoreau, Mrs. Stowe, and others have already been discussed, and a few more, though not necessarily the most important, will be mentioned here.

<sup>1</sup> Holmes states his view of aristocracy in a passage on self-made men in the first part of the *Autocrat*.

<sup>2</sup> His only rival in this field was Lowell; but Lowell often made use of humor of the other sort, as in some of the *Biglow Papers*.

**James T. Fields.** — The man who did most to bind the literary group together was JAMES T. FIELDS, the head of the chief publishing house in Boston, and the successor of Lowell as the editor of the *Atlantic Monthly*. As publisher and editor he was the helpful friend of the authors with whom he had to deal,<sup>1</sup> and many of the famous meetings of the literary set were due to his hospitality, or at least to his initiative. His *Yesterdays with Authors*, a book containing criticism and gossipy reminiscence of English and American men of letters, is interesting, and so to a lesser degree are his poems and miscellaneous essays; but it is for his influence on other authors rather than for his own work that he deserves to be remembered.

**Two New England Poets.** — Among the more important of the minor New England poets were Thomas William Parsons and William Wetmore Story.

Parsons was a native of Boston, but spent much time in Italy. His greatest work was a translation of Dante, on which he labored devotedly for many years. He also wrote a number of lyrics, the best of which is "On a Bust of Dante." The bulk of his original verse is small, and it is not of a sort to catch the popular ear, but he was a true poet, and some



Fields, Hawthorne, and Ticknor.

<sup>1</sup> Mention has already been made of Fields's service in inducing Hawthorne to expand the *Scarlet Letter* into a romance, and to the affectionate picture which Whittier drew of him as one of the characters in the "Tent on the Beach."

of his work is almost flawless. WILLIAM WETMORE STORY was another Massachusetts man who spent much of his life in Italy. He was the son of a distinguished jurist, and he himself attained distinction at the bar before he abandoned his profession to become a sculptor. In Italy he was an intimate friend of Robert Browning, and he wrote "dramatic lyrics" which show the influence of that poet, though he used the method in his own way.<sup>1</sup> He also wrote prose essays. With Story literature was only an avoca-



Louisa M. Alcott.

tion, and he did not put quite his best energies into his writings, yet most of them, and particularly his poems, are careful, well-considered work. Personally he was a man of culture and social charm, and he is mentioned appreciatively in the correspondence and reminiscences of the many English and American men of letters who visited Rome during his residence there.

#### Some New England Writers of Fiction. —

Two of the New England writers of fiction, LOUISA M. ALCOTT and J. T. TROWBRIDGE, addressed themselves especially to young people. Miss Alcott, daughter of the erratic Transcendentalist, Amos Bronson Alcott, was best in portraying the wholesome, homely life of a New England family, and she drew on her own experiences for some of her most interesting

<sup>1</sup> The best of Story's longer and more ingenious poems is "A Roman Lawyer in Jerusalem," a defense of Judas, in which the apologist tries to show that the motives for betraying Christ might have been wholly worthy. The best of his shorter poems is "Cleopatra," a study of passion which has something of the "dramatic" quality.



material. Her stories are humorous, and clever, show a helpful knowledge of human nature, and are not spoiled by preachy moralizing. Traditionally they are supposed to be for girls, but the boy who, openly or surreptitiously, has read his sister's copies of *Little Women* or *Eight Cousins* has surely found them enjoyable. On the other hand Trowbridge's books, supposedly for boys, are equally enjoyed by girls.<sup>1</sup> There is usually an element of adventure in these, but it is never of the sensational sort, and the story is often told with skill. In this connection should perhaps be mentioned the REVEREND JACOB ABBOTT, of Maine, whose *Rollo* books are also for young people, but are written with a didactic purpose similar to that of Peter Parley.



Donald G. Mitchell.

#### Some New England

**Essayists.** — DONALD G. MITCHELL, of Connecticut, who made use of the pen name Ik Marvel, was one of the most important of the minor essayists, though an element of old-fashioned sentimentality has caused his works to lose

<sup>1</sup> Trowbridge had a remarkably long career as a writer, and there are many of these stories. Every boy who has been fortunate enough to read them at the proper age has his own favorites, and will indignantly resent any different estimate of their relative values. The author of this book would modestly express his preference for the *Jack Hazard* series.

something of their former popularity. The best of his books is the *Reveries of a Bachelor*, a delightful rambling work which is, so to speak, between a romance and a series of personal essays. *Dream Life* is somewhat similar. Mitchell's later works are mostly personal essays and literary criticism. CHARLES DUDLEY WARNER, who had literary associations with various parts of the country, but who fairly



Charles Dudley Warner.

belongs to New England, was an essayist of the journalistic sort, the author of some light fiction, and the editor of the American Men of Letters series. The *Gilded Age* is a story which he wrote jointly with Mark Twain. Somewhat younger than these men was JOHN FISKE, a resident of Cambridge, who showed in his essays a remarkable power of interpreting the more abstruse

theories of modern philosophers to ordinary readers. He also wrote several works on American history and was especially interested in American political ideals.

**The New England Historians.**—Four other Massachusetts historians, WILLIAM HICKLING PRESCOTT, JOHN LOTHROP MOTLEY, GEORGE BANCROFT, and FRANCIS PARKMAN, won high rank, though they can be but briefly considered here. All were graduates of Harvard. Prescott, the eldest, wrote on Spanish history and Spanish conquest

in America.<sup>1</sup> Motley devoted himself to Dutch history, taking up the story where the affairs of Holland were entwined with those of Spain.<sup>2</sup> Bancroft and Parkman chose American subjects. Bancroft gave his long life to a general history of the United States, the first volume of which ap-



Home of Charles Dudley Warner at Hartford.

peared in 1834, and the last in 1882. Parkman wrote a series of volumes which, taken together, cover the whole history of the struggle between the English and the French

<sup>1</sup> His chief works are: *Ferdinand and Isabella, The Conquest of Mexico, The Conquest of Peru, and The Reign of Philip II.*

<sup>2</sup> His histories are: *The Rise of the Dutch Republic, The History of the United Netherlands, and John of Barneveld.*

in North America.<sup>1</sup> He was a master of both narration and description, and his works are wonderfully readable, while his painstaking care as an investigator gives them the highest value as history. Mention should also be made of his earliest volume, the *California and Oregon Trail*, which tells of a trip that he made in 1846 into the wilderness west of the Mississippi. It is full of stirring and varied adventure, and though a strict record of fact is more entertaining than most works of fiction.



William H. Prescott.

**New England Orators.**—Oratory in New England, at least the political oratory of the more cultured classes, followed for a long time the more ornate models. Webster and Everett lived well into this period. Wendell Phillips has already been mentioned. CHARLES SUMNER, the especial friend of Longfellow, and RUFUS CHOATE were both stu-

dents of the classics, and their speeches are elaborate and filled with quotations and allusions. While these men were delivering their ponderous orations in congress and elsewhere on formal occasions, Emerson, Thoreau, Lowell, Holmes, and hundreds of lecturers less famous were addressing lyceums in town halls and country schoolhouses. This may have helped to bring about the taste for a simpler style of

<sup>1</sup> This series includes: *The Conspiracy of Pontiac*; *Pioneers of France in the New World*; *The Jesuits in North America in the Seventeenth Century*; *La Salle or the Discovery of the Great West*; *The Old Régime in Canada*; *Count Frontenac and New France under Louis XIV*; *Montcalm and Wolfe*; and *A Half-Century of Conflict*.

oratory which began to manifest itself before the close of the period.

**New England Humorists.** — Besides Lowell and Holmes, who are so much more than mere humorists, New England produced several men who are remembered chiefly for their fun. The greatest of these was CHARLES FARRAR BROWNE, known by his pen name of Artemus Ward. Like many humorists of the same class he gained his training in newspaper offices. His fun is of the boisterous, rollicking sort, intermixed with quiet drollery and unexpected turns of thought and phrase. Artemus Ward lectured with success in the East, in California, and in England, but he died of consumption at the early age of thirty-three, perhaps before his genius was fully developed.



John Lothrop Motley.

**Hale and Higginson.** — Two late survivors of the Boston-Cambridge group were active in so many kinds of literary work that it is hard to classify them. The REVEREND EDWARD EVERETT HALE, whose long life extended from 1822 to 1909, wrote essays, biographies, histories, and fiction.



George Bancroft.

Almost all of this is good and readable, but perhaps it is some of his short stories which are most likely to last. "The Man without a Country," written to arouse patriotism during the Civil War, is one of the most artistic and effective of American prose tales. The REVEREND THOMAS WENTWORTH HIGGINSON, who was born in 1823 and who died in 1911, stood in close relationship to the greater New England men of

letters. He was active in the anti-slavery campaign and in the agitation for women's rights, as in literary affairs, and he wrote much on the great movements which he saw and part of which he was. It is probably his gossipy and reminiscent writings which have greatest permanent value, though he published histories, biographies, poems, and essays.

**Men of One Work.** — In contrast to the two versatile writers just named stand sev-



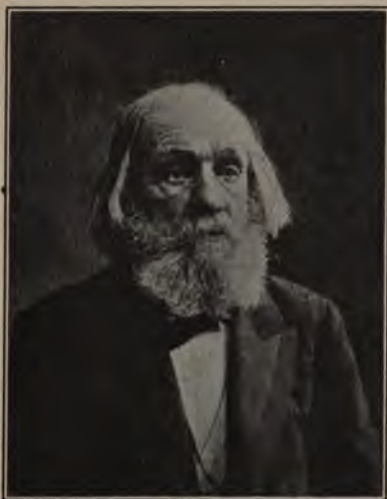
Francis Parkman.

eral who are likely to be remembered, each for only one work. SAMUEL F. SMITH, a classmate of Holmes at Harvard, wrote the verses of the national hymn, "My



Charles Sumner and Longfellow.

country, 'tis of thee." MRS. JULIA WARD HOWE will probably be known only by the "Battle Hymn of the Republic," though she wrote much against slavery and in favor of women's suffrage. R. H. DANA, JR., son of



Edward Everett Hale.

the older Boston poet and story-writer, was the author of *Two Years Before the Mast*. This delightful narrative tells of the author's cruise from Boston to California and back, around the Cape, and is probably the best true narrative of life on an old-time American sailing vessel. DANIEL P. THOMPSON, of Vermont, wrote the *Green Mountain Boys*, an old-fashioned historical

novel dealing with the Revolution, which has delighted many readers.

#### THE MIDDLE STATES

**Literary Conditions in New York.** — Even while the Boston-Cambridge group of writers was at its best, New York was in one sense the literary center of the country. Here were the greatest metropolitan newspapers, and with one or two exceptions in each instance the greatest publishing houses and the greatest literary magazines.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The high-grade illustrated magazines were developed in New York, and with the invention of improved processes of printing pictures they outstripped in popular favor the magazines which, like the *Atlantic Monthly*, had few or no illustrations. The best of these have been *Harper's Monthly*, the old *Scribner's Monthly*, which later became the *Century*, and the new *Scribner's Magazine*. There have also been many others of no mean merit.



The Boston-Cambridge writers were all New Englanders who preserved their inheritance of temperament and ideals. The New York writers were, as in the earlier period, men of varied ancestry and training attracted from all parts of the country, often for commercial reasons or reasons of convenience. They did not center about a great college like Harvard, or about a great magazine like the *Atlantic Monthly*. They did not constitute a "school," and their writings did not necessarily represent the spirit of New York City or of the middle states.

**Walt Whitman.**

—WALT WHITMAN, the most striking of the New York poets, was one of those who did attempt to present

the spirit of the metropolis, or, more accurately, the spirit of the nation as shown in the metropolis. He was born on Long Island in 1819, the same year as Lowell, and about half a generation after the older New England men of letters. He received a common school education, and himself taught common school for a winter or two. His most



Whitman in 1855 — Frontispiece to first edition of *Leaves of Grass*

valuable training, however, was obtained in newspaper offices, where he held various positions from compositor to editor, never remaining long in one office or situation. He also followed for a time the business of building and selling small dwelling houses in Brooklyn. Until he was forty-three years old he lived most of the time in and near Brooklyn and New York City, except for a year or two when he took a trip to New Orleans and worked at his trade in various cities on the way back. After the battle of Fredericksburg he went South to find his brother, who had been wounded, and he remained in the hospitals about Washington as a volunteer nurse to other soldiers. He held government clerkships in Washington until 1873, when a stroke of paralysis necessitated his retirement. From this time until his death in 1892 he lived in Camden, New Jersey.

Few of Whitman's writings produced during his early connection with newspapers have been preserved, and these few are of slight merit and show little resemblance to his later work. The first edition of *Leaves of Grass* came out in 1855. "Leaves of Grass" was a title which he adopted, not for this particular collection, but for his complete poetical works; and between 1855 and 1891 he published ten issues or editions, each larger than the preceding, and containing all his poems which, at the time, he wished preserved. He also collected a volume of his prose writings which includes, among other things, some interesting and valuable autobiographic memoranda entitled "Specimen Days," and "Democratic Vistas," the essay in which he most fully expounds his peculiar theories.

Two peculiarities of the *Leaves of Grass* at once attracted attention. The poems were not in regular verse form, but were without rhyme or regular meter; and the author discussed with perfect frankness certain topics which are usually



Whitman's birthplace.

referred to but indirectly in English literature. Neither of these characteristics seems quite so striking as it did in 1855, and though neither has won very general approval, the critics of to-day recognize that both are the natural results of the author's theory of poetry. Whitman announced a new poetry which was to be wholly free from the limitations of tradition and rules, and which was to treat all subjects in accordance with their true value. He discarded meter and rhyme because he thought they hampered and repressed the poet; and he wrote on tabooed subjects because, since all organs and functions of the body are equally natural, he thought them equally fitted for treatment in literature. His one great word was "democracy," which to him meant chiefly "equality," — that every person and every thing in the universe is, so to speak, as good as every other person and thing.<sup>1</sup> He wrote much of "I" and "myself," explaining, what his first readers sometimes missed, that by these pronouns he meant not alone himself, but every individual.<sup>2</sup> When he specified other persons they were often men of the class that most appealed to him — uncultured but capable, energetic laborers, such as engineers, omnibus drivers, and street car conductors. He extended his idea of democracy to things as well as to persons, and though he was especially moved by some of the

<sup>1</sup> There is an obvious similarity between this view and the theories of transcendentalism. Whitman was early attracted by Emerson, and Emerson in turn paid high tribute to the first edition of *Leaves of Grass*, though he regretted Whitman's extreme peculiarities. Later, Whitman disclaimed any indebtedness to Emerson — or to any one else — but it is probable that at first he was influenced to some extent by the New England Transcendentalists.

<sup>2</sup> "I celebrate myself, and sing myself,

And what I assume you shall assume,

For every atom belonging to me as good belongs to you."

Opening lines of "Song of Myself."

finer aspects of nature, such as the sea, he also wrote on such subjects as the compost heap. He even believed in the equality of words, and deliberately gave colloquialisms and slang a place in his poetic vocabulary.

There are many questions regarding Whitman's character<sup>1</sup> and the character of his writings which cannot be discussed here, but it will be sufficient if the student grasps the essentials of his theory of poetry and decides for himself whether they are true. For his theory as theory something can be said. The most repulsive tramp is still a human being, and most of us would hesitate to say that one human soul is less valuable than another human soul. The chemical changes that produce the odors of the compost heap follow the same laws as those which produce the odors of the flower, and to a scientist are just as interesting. The question is, are the tramp and the compost heap as appropriate subjects for poetry as the innocent maiden and the rose? or, to put the question abstractly, is poetry as broad in its subjects as philosophy and science? Whitman answered these questions in the affirmative. Those who agree with him should have no difficulty in accepting his poems. The great majority of readers believe, however, that art has laws and a field of its own, and that when Whitman ignored these laws and ventured outside this field he was misled.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Among these is the question of his genuineness. Many persons have believed that he was always posing, and that he advocated his peculiar views only because they would attract attention. In support of this belief they point to the oddities of dress which he always affected, to his habit of writing notices of himself and sending them to the newspapers, and to the egotism shown in his letters and other writings. It is hard to deny that he was egotistical or that he posed sometimes, but there seems no good reason for thinking that he did not believe the things he advocated.

<sup>2</sup> It is unfortunate that the beginner cannot ignore the question of the morals of Whitman's poems, but so much has been said of

More than one poet has been better than his poetical theories, and this is probably true of Whitman. Those who are not ready to accept him as the prophet of a new poetry find, in chosen passages of his works, much to admire. There is a tonic quality in his free, robust view of life, and there are bits of his poems that are expressed with great



Whitman at seventy.

power. The absence of the usual verse form is likely to prove troublesome at first, and perhaps the *Leaves of Grass* would be more effective if it were printed like prose. In that case one would not try to scan it, as one instinctively does anything divided into lines beginning with capital letters. Read as one would read, for example, the impassioned prose of the *Bible*, such poems as "Out of the Cradle Endlessly Rocking," and

"When Lilacs Last in the Door-Yard Bloomed" have a wonderful melody, which becomes more and more im-

his impropriety that this is difficult. When *Leaves of Grass* first appeared, critics argued: "Heretofore certain subjects have been mentioned in poetry only by licentious poets; Whitman mentions them, therefore he is licentious." As a matter of fact, most of the objectionable passages in *Leaves of Grass* are no more licentious than the discussions of similar subjects in a sociological or a medical treatise. Morbid and evil-minded persons can get an improper satisfaction from reading them, as they can from reading certain books in every doctor's library; but they are to be condemned, not for this reason, but because they have no place in literature. They are not poetry. The best plan is for the beginner to let them alone — there are not many of them — and form his opinion of Whitman from passages that raise only æsthetic questions.

pressive as the reader grows accustomed to it. Even in the best poems, to be sure, are passages which fall from the general level, and in many are long prosaic sections, mere catalogues of things, which only the enthusiastic worshiper of Whitman can consider poetry. But it is not by these that his best should be judged.

In Europe, Whitman has often been called the most distinctive figure in American literature, partly, perhaps, because Europeans think that the distinctive literature of a democratic nation must be wholly different from that of the older world, partly because his conception of democracy is more nearly that of the European than that of the American.<sup>1</sup> In America he has won his way slowly, and he has hardly won it at all among the people for whom he tried to speak. He objected to the poetry of the past because it did not deal enough with the common, everyday man, and he tried to remedy the deficiency. Yet his following has been almost wholly among the academic classes, and not one in a thousand of the "common people" knows Whitman as well as he knows Longfellow. It is unlikely that he will ever make his way directly to the hearts of such persons; but the recognition that there is a partial truth in his theories has done something to increase the breadth and range of poetry, and his form, while accepted in its full freedom by few poets, has influenced the versification of the last generation.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> For an interesting presentation of this fact see Professor Barrett Wendell's *Literary History of America*, pp. 467-471.

<sup>2</sup> As some students of this book will be making their first acquaintance with Whitman, a few hints and suggestions may be worth while, especially to those who are repelled by their first glance into *Leaves of Grass*. Begin with brief descriptive poems, such as "To the Man-of-War Bird," "Ethiopia Saluting the Colors," "On the Beach at Night," "With Haughty-Husky Lips, O Sea," "The Voice of the Rain," and with such longer poems as "When Lilacs

**The "Bohemians."** — During Whitman's later residence in New York he was a member of the group known as the "Bohemians," of whose meetings in Pfaff's basement restaurant on Broadway many interesting stories are told. The Bohemians were mostly newspaper men, many of them geniuses of peculiar or irregular habits. Almost the only members of the group who are now remembered, except Whitman, are WILLIAM WINTER, who later had a long career in New York as journalist and dramatic critic, and FITZ-JAMES O'BRIEN. O'Brien was a native of Ireland who came to New York about 1852 and before his death ten years later did much writing for newspapers and magazines. His best work was in his imaginative prose tales, a few of which had an important place in the development of the American short story.<sup>1</sup>

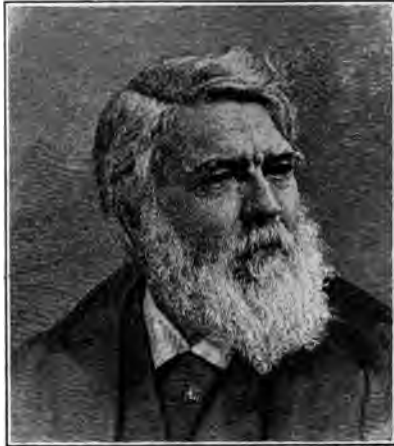
**Stoddard, Stedman, and Aldrich.** — Another group of writers who sometimes looked in at Pfaff's restaurant, though they were of quite another sort from the real Bohemians, included Richard Henry Stoddard, Edmund Clarence Stedman, Thomas Bailey Aldrich, and Bayard Taylor — the last named for a time a resident of New York, but be-

Last in the Door-Yard Bloomed," and "Out of the Cradle Endlessly Rocking." Leave such pieces as the "Song of Myself," the mere catalogues, and the passages that have aroused controversy until you understand just what Whitman was trying to do. Do not be disturbed by the lack of ordinary verse form. Read aloud, if possible, but read as you read rhythmical prose, not as verse, and notice especially the vividness, the delicate accuracy, and the suggestiveness of the pictures that the author paints.

<sup>1</sup> The three best of O'Brien's tales are "What Was It? a Mystery," "The Diamond Lens," and "The Wondersmith." All these have some faults of construction, but show unusual original imagination. The striking idea of a supernatural being invisible but perceptible to the sense of touch, first developed in "What Was It? a Mystery," has been borrowed by various authors, American and European.



longing more properly to Pennsylvania.<sup>1</sup> All these men were connected with newspapers and magazines, all were good friends, and all agreed to some extent in literary ideals. In general, they emphasized the idea that literature is an art, not primarily a means of conveying information, or inculcating morals. Their writings were every whit as pure and clean as those of the Boston-Cambridge writers, but they did not directly preach philosophy like Emerson, or specific reforms like Whittier and Lowell, or personal morals like Longfellow; and they gave more heed than some of these men to perfection of literary form. All wrote poetry, and all were influenced by the greater English masters of the lyric, and strove in their own work for the subtler tones and music of verse. Taken together they constitute the second most important



Richard Henry Stoddard.

literary group of the mid-century. Though they were not the equals in genius of the greatest New Englanders, their ideals were in many respects those which American literature has since followed, and in some ways they are deserving of more attention than they have usually received.

<sup>1</sup> It might be noted that none of these men were New Yorkers by birth, or attended any New York educational institution. Taylor was from Pennsylvania, the others were from New England.

RICHARD HENRY STODDARD, a Massachusetts boy who came to New York at the age of ten, and who was self-supporting after he was fifteen, worked as shop boy, clerk, blacksmith, molder, and carriage painter before he secured a government clerkship that enabled him to cultivate his strong love for literature. Stoddard did some editing and wrote much literary criticism and some miscellaneous prose, but is most important as a poet. He had a fine sense of melody, and his best lyrics are musical and show careful and finished workmanship. His longer poems were also conscientiously done, but are uneven in quality.

EDMUND CLARENCE STEDMAN, who much to his own disgust was often called the "banker poet," came from Connecticut to New York when a young man, and became a broker. He fell in with the literary set, contributed to newspapers, and for a short time was a newspaper correspondent, but for the greater part of his life he was in Wall Street. His highest interest was always, however, in literature, and when at last after many financial ups and downs he acquired a modest competence he retired to give his last few years to his favorite pursuits. Even while in business he did much editing and wrote considerable literary criticism. His *American Anthology* and *Poets of America* are still without serious rivals in their fields, and similar works on the Victorian age in England have much merit. His own poems show considerable variety. Some of his mildly humorous verses and a number of pieces written for special occasions are good. Still better are some short idyls of New England country life, and a few other lyrics of feeling.

THOMAS BAILEY ALDRICH was born in Portsmouth, New Hampshire, he spent the last forty years of his life in and near Boston, and for a time he was editor of the *Atlantic Monthly*. It is therefore doubtful whether he should not

have been discussed among the New England writers. But he was in New York during the impressionable years of his life, he began his literary career there, and his ideals were always those of his New York associates. He came to New York at the age of sixteen to take a position in a business office, but he was strongly attracted to literature, and between 1855 and 1865 he held various editorial positions and published several volumes

of prose and verse. He was always fresh and spontaneous in his work, but he valued perfection of form even more than did his New York friends. He revised carefully and repeatedly, and he rejected much that he had written, so that only a small part of what he published stands in his collected works. His best prose is doubtless found in the *Story of a Bad Boy*, and some of the short tales.

The former, an account of a boy "who was not such a very bad boy," is largely autobiographical, the name of the hero being given as "Tom Bailey," and his native town as "Rivermouth." It is full of delicately blended humor and pathos, and shows an understanding of boy nature and of all other human nature as well. "Marjory Daw," a masterly hoax, is the most popular of his short stories, though many others show almost equal charm of style and careful handling



Thomas Bailey Aldrich.

of plot. Like Stoddard and Stedman he is best in his brief poems — “Interludes,” he called them. These combine the perfection of form which we associate with “society verse,” and a true and serious insight into life. There are fine things in his longer poems, too, but these are hardly so sure to last. Aldrich was one of the most gifted of the New York writers, and later was one of the most important members of the younger New England circle.

**Some New York Editors and Miscellaneous Writers.** — The New York writers still to be discussed had in most instances no close connection with the two groups already considered, or with each other. Several of these held editorial positions on newspapers and magazines.

NATHANIEL PARKER WILLIS, a native of Portland, Maine, who left New England because he found the Puritanic strictness oppressive, was for many years associated with popular literary periodicals in New York. He was one of the earliest writers of travel letters from abroad, and his prose written at home was largely newspaper correspondence, afterward collected into volumes.<sup>1</sup> He also wrote poems, among which were several paraphrases of Bible narratives which now seem thin and inartistic, but which were greatly admired in an age when reverence for the *Bible* prevented people from thinking of it as literature. Willis himself said that he preferred to do journalistic work, to write for the present enjoyment of his readers rather than to attempt more ambitious things for the chance of lasting fame; and although he was at one time often named among the few greater American writers, he is now almost forgotten.

GEORGE WILLIAM CURTIS, a somewhat younger man, has already been mentioned as a pupil at Brook Farm. He

<sup>1</sup> Some of the titles of these volumes, such as *Pencillings by the Way*, *Loiterings of Travel*, *Out-Doors at Idlewild*, *Life Here and There*, etc., are suggestive of the nature of his work.

went abroad, visited the East, wrote some delightful books of travel, the *Nile Notes of a Howadji* and *The Howadji in Syria*, and returned to take up editorial labors in New York. Many of his best essays were written for the Easy Chair department of *Harper's Monthly*, which he long conducted. *Prue and I* and the



George William Curtis.

*Potiphar Papers* are informal volumes satirizing New York life. Curtis was also a polished speaker, and his orations on public questions take high rank.

**Henry Ward Beecher.**

— A greater orator, perhaps the greatest pulpit orator that America has produced, was the REVEREND HENRY WARD BEECHER, long pastor of Plymouth Church, Brooklyn. Beecher was liberal in his theological beliefs, and he discussed practical questions in the pulpit when such a course was less common



Henry Ward Beecher.

than it is now. He was one of the first American preachers whose sermons were regularly printed in the newspapers, and he may be said to have had a nation-wide congregation. More interesting to-day than his sermons are his addresses on political and social topics. He was a leader in the antislavery movement, and spoke in favor of the cause both at home and abroad. During the war he went to England and endeavored to gain public sympathy for the North. His addresses in Liverpool, Manchester, and other commercial towns where Southern sentiment was strong are perhaps the best modern examples of skill in handling a hostile audience.

**New York Writers of Fiction.** — Among New York storytellers was HERMAN MELVILLE, who went to sea before he was twenty, and a little later sailed on a whaler for the South Pacific Ocean, and had many exciting experiences on ship and on land before his return. Three of his books, *Typee*, *Omoo*, and *White Jacket*, tell of occurrences on this trip. He also wrote novels of adventure, the best being *Moby Dick or the White Whale*. Both the autobiographical books and the novels are full of excitement, are wholesome, and well told.

**William Dean Howells.** — The greater part of the literary work of MR. WILLIAM DEAN HOWELLS has been done since 1883, but he was really the product of the earlier period. Born in Ohio in 1837, he, like many other American writers, received much of his early training in the offices of local newspapers. In 1860 he wrote a campaign life of Lincoln, and a year later was rewarded by an appointment as consul to Venice. He had already contributed poems to the *Atlantic Monthly*, and on a brief visit to Boston had met Lowell and Holmes. While in Venice he devoted his leisure to the study of Italian art and literature; and throughout life his

scholarly habits and interests have amply made up for his lack of a college training. As a result of his first experience abroad he published two charming volumes, *Venetian Life* and *Italian Journeys*. After his return to America he was connected with several New York papers. Then he served for fifteen years as assistant editor and editor of the *Atlantic Monthly*, and since 1886 has been associated with *Harper's Magazine* and for a time with the *Cosmopolitan Magazine*, New York.<sup>1</sup>



William Dean Howells.

Mr. Howells has been a tireless literary worker. The latest list of his writings includes seventy titles, not counting new editions and works of which he is the editor; and the greater part of his contributions to magazines has never been collected. The list includes travels, poetry, and miscellaneous and critical essays, but the author's most important work is as a writer of fiction. He is the chief of the realists —

<sup>1</sup> It will be noticed that Howells, like Aldrich and James, might be given a place with the New England writers. The careers of these men are a reminder that before the close of the period under consideration the old sectional lines which had existed for two hundred and fifty years were fast breaking down.

the novelists who believe in portraying life as it is, selecting their material, to be sure, but not coloring or idealizing it.<sup>1</sup> In his later years he has been somewhat influenced by Tolstoi, the great Russian novelist, whom he greatly admires. While he is not in the least Puritanic, he is wholly free from the tendency to choose the morbid and the unwholesome, as some European disciples of realism or naturalism have done. Even those who disapprove his work can offer no objection to the morals or the good taste of his stories. These unfriendly critics complain that his plots lack definiteness, that the incidents are trivial, and that his men and women have not great souls which inspire the reader. His admirers point to the naturalness and the genuine human truth of both actions and characters, and say that a real man or woman is far more convincing than an impossible idealized hero, or a made-up villain. As was said in the discussion of Cooper, the question is one of temperament; but there can be no doubt that Mr. Howells has done what he set out to do, and has made clean, readable stories. His style, while sometimes characterized as too clever, is charming, and he has an ever-present but never boisterous humor. Besides his novels Mr. Howells has written short stories, several farces, and short humorous narratives in dialogue form.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> For Mr. Howells's own presentation of his theory see his very interesting *Criticism and Fiction*.

<sup>2</sup> Among the novels most read are *Their Wedding Journey*, *A Chance Acquaintance*, *A Foregone Conclusion*, *The Lady of the Aroostook*, *A Modern Instance*, *The Rise of Silas Lapham*, *A Hazard of New Fortunes*. It is hard to say which is the best. Many of Mr. Howells's admirers would give first rank to *The Rise of Silas Lapham*, but most of the others on the list and some not named would receive many suffrages for this position. Several of the later short stories are collected in the volume *Between the Dark and the Daylight*. The best known farces are "The Parlor Car," "The Sleeping Car," and "The Elevator."



**Henry James.** — Mr. Howells's greatest rival in realism is MR. HENRY JAMES. Born in New York City in 1843, Mr. James received part of his education at Harvard and part abroad, and has spent most of the time since 1869 in France and England. He, too, has been a most voluminous writer. His realism differs from that of Mr. Howells in that he goes deeper into the psychology of his characters, or at any rate leads the reader to philosophize more about them. He is fond of studying men and women in situations which are not quite natural for them, or which they do not quite understand. Many of his novels, especially those of earlier date, are of the "international" type, in which representatives of different countries are brought together, and in which part of the complication comes from the fact that they do not fully comprehend each others' standards and views of life.<sup>1</sup> In recent years Mr. James's philosophical interest



Henry James.

<sup>1</sup> This choice of subject is hinted at in such titles as *The American*, *The Europeans*, *An International Episode*. Mr. James's early tale, *Daisy Miller*, in which a pure but untrained and overindependent American girl shocks the European sense of propriety, was resented by some of the author's countrywomen, who thought the portrayal unpatriotic and unchivalrous. Mr. James is especially fond of getting a group of different characters together, as in an international *pension*, or an English country-house party.

or some other cause has brought about a change in his style, and even in his narrative method. His writings have become involved, abstruse, and hard to follow, so that they give little pleasure to many readers who are enthusiastic over his earlier work. Mr. James is not only a novelist, but one of the greatest recent masters of the short story. Most of his stories are somewhat longer than the average of those in the popular American magazines, and are more solid in content. They show great variety, and are organized and told with much skill. Many of the author's plots do not end with any great catastrophe or striking climax, and in general his work does not appeal to those who want an exciting story for the sake of the story. He is not much approved, either, by those who demand that their fiction shall teach an obvious moral, and his character portrayals and incidents are less lightly entertaining than those of Mr. Howells. For these reasons he has a restricted audience. The reader who is willing to think a little over his fiction, and who finds the study of men and women perennially interesting, is likely to rank his earlier work very high.<sup>1</sup>

**Some New York Writers of Verse.** — ALICE and PHŒBE CARY, two sisters attracted from their Ohio home to the metropolis, wrote prose and graceful verses, and are among the most genuine and unaffected of American poetesses.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Among the better novels and tales of moderate length are *A Passionate Pilgrim*, *The American*, *Daisy Miller*, *An International Episode*, *Roderick Hudson*, *The Madonna of the Future*, *The Portrait of a Lady*. It is hard to choose among short stories, but a tentative list for first acquaintance might include "The Lesson of the Master," "The Wheel of Time," "The Private Life," "The Tone of Time," "Sir Edmund Orme."

<sup>2</sup> Phœbe Cary is the author of the familiar hymn beginning, "One sweetly solemn thought," and of the hopeful juvenile poem, "Suppose, my little lady,  
Your doll should break her head."

EMMA LAZARUS, a precocious New York girl of Jewish descent, wrote late in the period poems, plays, and miscellaneous prose. During her more mature years her work was largely influenced by her interest in movements for the betterment of the Jewish people. She had energy and fire, and some of her lyrics, especially, show a high degree of artistic finish.

**Literary Conditions in Philadelphia.** — As was remarked in the discussion of the preceding period, Philadelphia has always been a literary center of importance, but has produced few men of letters of the first rank. Since the days of Franklin Philadelphia publishers have given special attention to scientific works and to popular annuals and magazines.

**Bayard Taylor.** — The most important of the Philadelphia writers between 1833 and 1883 was BAYARD TAYLOR, whose association with Stoddard, Stedman, and Aldrich in New York has already been mentioned. A native of rural Pennsylvania, he was early apprenticed to a country printer, and at the age of nineteen published his first volume of poems. He then went abroad for two years, and contributed to newspapers a series of travel letters later collected under the title of *Views Afoot*. This was the first of his volumes descriptive of travels which before his death covered a great part of the globe. When not traveling, he lectured and held various editorial positions. In 1878 he was appointed United States minister to Germany, but died immediately after taking up his official duties. Besides his



Bayard Taylor.

books of travel he wrote essays, short stories, novels, poems, and dramatic works, and made a verse translation of Goethe's *Faust*. His best work is found in this translation, the books of travel, and the shorter poems.

With the improvement of processes of illustration and with the development of "globe-trotting" as a national habit, the descriptive book of travel has largely gone out of



A "snap-shot" of William Dean Howells and Bayard Taylor.

fashion. It was an important form of writing in its day, and Bayard Taylor was perhaps the greatest American master of the form. He was a good observer, he knew what would interest others, and he wrote in clear and pleasing prose. While there may be some differences of opinion as to which of his poems are best, many readers will find most enjoyment in the *Poems of the Orient*, published when he was thirty years of age. These are mostly lyrics, some of them influenced by Shelley.

The most popular is the "Bedouin Love Song." Taylor always agreed with his New York friends in viewing literature as an art which called for labor and pains, and in his later years he became highly critical of his own work and wrought out some of his poems with such care that they seem lacking in naturalness. This is especially true of his two long and ambitious dramatic pieces, "The Masque of the Gods" and "Prince Deukalion," though through both

these are scattered fine lyrics. The translation of *Faust* is a thorough and careful piece of work, and has been ranked by many scholars as the best rendering of Goethe's masterpiece into English verse. Taylor was a man whose genius always seemed to promise more than he actually achieved. He did not win a place among the greatest American authors, but both his personality and his position make him an interesting study.

**Some Lesser Philadelphia Writers.** — The next in importance of the Pennsylvania writers was GEORGE H. BOKER, a graduate of Princeton and a wealthy and distinguished citizen of Philadelphia. His short poems, especially some of his sonnets, are good, but his best work is in four blank verse tragedies, and the best of these is *Francesca da Rimini*. This is somewhat old-fashioned in structure, but it is one of the best acting dramas based on the immortal story from Dante, and is still sometimes played by the best American tragedians. THOMAS BUCHANAN READ was a versatile Pennsylvanian who finally became a painter and a poet. Some of his poems are long and ambitious, but he is likely to be remembered as the author of "Sheridan's Ride" and one or two other brief poems.

## THE SOUTH

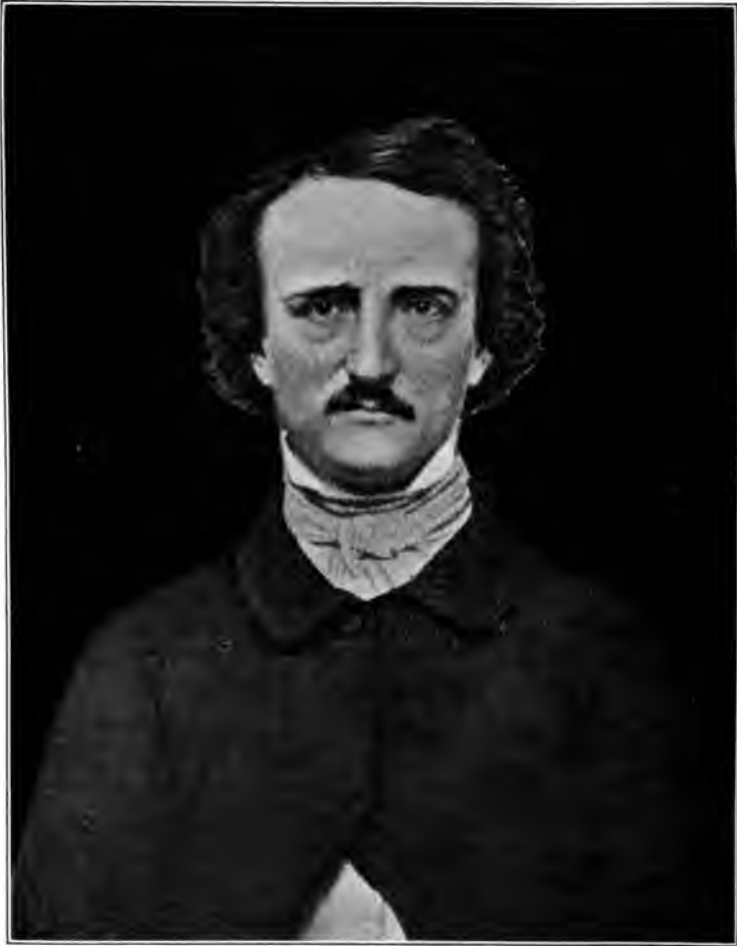
**General Conditions in the South.** — The South had fewer great cities than the North, and less adequate publishing facilities. Baltimore, Richmond, and Charleston supported creditable literary periodicals, all of which had an air of gentlemanly leisure and culture, but lacked the energy of the better Northern magazines. Before the war Southern men of ability were likely to enter law and politics, rather than more distinctly literary callings, and the feeling still

existed in some quarters that literature was an admirable diversion, but hardly a creditable profession for a gentleman. The war, while it called forth many songs and expressions of devotion to the Confederate cause, tended to paralyze literature. Since the South suffered relatively more than the North, recovery was slow, and few writers who represent the "New South" really belong to the period before 1883.

**Edgar Allan Poe.** — By far the ablest writer of Southern ancestry who flourished before the war was EDGAR ALLAN POE. His father was of respectable Southern connections, but had alienated himself from his family by going on the stage and marrying an actress. Edgar was born in 1809, in Boston, where his parents chanced to be playing. Both father and mother died when he was very young, and he was taken into the family of a Mr. Allan of Richmond. In 1815 Mr. Allan went to England, and from his sixth to his eleventh year Edgar was in a boy's school near London.<sup>1</sup> Later he spent one year at the University of Virginia, where he made a good showing in his studies, but like most students of the institution at that time indulged in gambling. The gambling debts and perhaps other delinquencies on Poe's part led to an estrangement from the Allans,<sup>2</sup> and the boy

<sup>1</sup> The picture of English school life in Poe's tale, *William Wilson*, is said to be drawn from the author's own experiences.

<sup>2</sup> By this time Mr. Allan had accumulated considerable property, though when Poe entered his household he was in very moderate circumstances. The stories sometimes met with, that Poe was reared in great luxury, that he acquired his taste for liquor at Mr. Allan's table, etc., are part of the bewildering tradition that grew up after Poe's death. Poe's real friend was Mrs. Allan, and it is doubtful if her husband was ever much in sympathy with the boy. The final break did not come until Mrs. Allan was dead and Mr. Allan had married again. The new wife was clearly hostile to Poe, but where the justice of the quarrel lay is not easy to determine. An obvious though perhaps an unfair supposition is that she did not wish Poe to share the inheritance with her own child.



Edgar Allan Poe.

who had expected to inherit a comfortable property found himself adrift in the world, where he had neither the temperament nor the training to make his way. He enlisted in the army, where his record was so good that friends secured for him an appointment at West Point. He soon tired of a military career, however, and in 1831 was dismissed for deliberate neglect of his military duties. It is somewhat uncertain what he did for the next year or two, but in 1833 he entered several tales and poems in the contest for a prize offered by a Baltimore paper. He won not only the prize, but the attention of some literary men of Baltimore, who secured for him an editorship on the *Southern Literary Messenger* at Richmond, — one of the leading magazines of the South. A little later he married his cousin, Virginia Clemm. From 1837 to his death in 1849 he lived in Philadelphia and New York, where he was much of the time employed in editorial work.<sup>1</sup> His first volume, *Tamerlane and other Poems*, was published anonymously when he was eighteen years of age, and was followed two years later, in 1829, by *Al Araaf, Tamerlane and other Poems*, and by a third volume of poems in 1831. His longest prose tale, the *Narrative of Arthur Gordon Pym*, was issued in book form in 1838; collections of stories were published in 1839 and 1845, and a volume of poems in 1845. Most of his writings first appeared in the periodicals of which he was editor. The first collected edition of his works was published shortly after his death.

Poe's work was but slightly appreciated in his lifetime.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> In Philadelphia he was connected successively with *Burton's Gentleman's Magazine* and *Graham's Magazine*; in New York with N. P. Willis's paper, *The Evening Mirror*, and later with the *Broadway Journal*, of which he was for a short time proprietor.

<sup>2</sup> Poe tried in vain to find publishers who would issue his works. He received nothing for the first collection of his tales except twenty



Lack of sympathy with the prevailing literary fashions, outspoken independence as a critic, an occasional display of bad temper, and certain personal weaknesses made his career troubled and precarious. His arduous editorial duties, which often included the filling of space with his own writings, never brought him larger remuneration than that which the most insignificant reporter on a daily paper now earns. His struggle with poverty was made the more painful by the long and hopeless illness of his wife. It was under such circumstances that Poe wrote; and while his works are not, as some critics have assumed, autobiographical, they were necessarily influenced somewhat by his life.<sup>1</sup>

copies of the book for distribution among friends; and when two or three years later he offered the same publishers another collection on the same terms they declined, saying that the first venture had not paid expenses. To-day probably more than twenty-five American publishers issue editions of the tales, and the annual sale must run into the tens of thousands of volumes.

<sup>1</sup> It is most unfortunate that one cannot study Poe without considering the numerous stories concerning his life and moral character. When he died he entrusted the editing of his works to the Reverend Rufus W. Griswold. Griswold seems to have cherished a grudge on account of some harsh criticisms which Poe had passed on his books. At all events he prefixed to his edition of Poe a memoir which is unreliable in many statements, and which it seems hard to believe was not deliberately unjust and unfair. His picture of Poe as a diabolical monster, moving in gloom and believing that his soul was hopelessly lost, took the popular fancy, and the most extravagant romances about the life of the poet gained currency. Even to-day the judicially minded person sometimes finds it hard to know what to believe. The facts seem to be, however, that during most of his life Poe suffered from occasional fits of intemperance which sometimes interfered with his holding regular positions. He was never an habitual drunkard, and he sometimes went for long periods without tasting liquor. But total abstinence, relatively easy now, was sometimes almost impossible when every gentleman took wine, and when a refusal to drink might be considered as a slight upon one's host or hostess; and Poe's constitution seems to have been such that a single glass produced symptoms of

Poe's important writings fall into three classes, literary criticisms, prose tales, and poems. His criticisms are found in reviews contributed to the magazines of which he was editor, and in one or two more general essays, such as "The Poetic Principle" and "The Philosophy of Composition." Poe believed that literature is an art. He opposed the "inspiration" theory of poetry, so common in his day, and held that a poem requires painstaking and repeated labor as much as a picture or a statue.<sup>1</sup> He defined poetry as "the rhythmical creation of beauty," the object of which was to elevate the soul and give the highest pleasure, not to teach specific lessons. There was nothing new in this; but he went farther than most critics who had held the same general view, and announced that every poem should be dominated by one emotion, and that since the emotions can be aroused only for a little time, a true poem must be short. He held, too, that in the highest beauty, which is the true theme of poetry, is ever an element of sadness. This view of course greatly restricted the poet, both in choice of subject and in the length and structure of his work. Poe was the first critic to lay down laws for the short story and to recognize its importance as a literary form. Indeed, he ranked it

intoxication which in case of most men would result only from extreme overindulgence. After the death of his wife his self-control weakened somewhat, he may have made use of drugs, and it is probable, though not certain, that his death resulted from intoxication. During most of his life his excesses, though not to be excused, were not frequent, and were such as would have been glossed over if they had been committed by a more popular man. He occasionally showed vindictiveness and bad temper, and was a trifle double faced in speaking of his friends. None of the other charges against his moral character has been substantiated.

<sup>1</sup> It should be noted that Poe was nearly a generation earlier than the New Yorkers whose views of poetry were somewhat similar, and that his theory was more fully elaborated and more definite than theirs.

higher than the novel, for reasons similar to those which led him to prefer the short to the long poem. He held that the tale, like the poem, should be dominated by a single emotional effect, to the production of which everything from beginning to end should tend. His criticisms of particular authors were in most cases fair, though occasionally he showed bitterness and prejudice. He was out of sympathy with the New England writers, partly because he disap-



Poe's cottage at Fordham, New York.

proved of their didacticism, partly, it sometimes seems, because he was jealous of their popularity. Still, he was almost always just, even to them.<sup>1</sup>

Most of Poe's writings conform to his theories. With the exception of the *Narrative of Arthur Gordon Pym* and

<sup>1</sup> His charge of "plagiarism" against Longfellow has been mentioned, but this is explained by his unwarranted definition of the word; and he always gave Longfellow higher rank than most critics give him to-day.

one or two other tales of adventure whose realism suggests DeFoe each of his stories is dominated by a single emotional effect, and is short. The presentation of the highest beauty he held to be the province of the poem, and in the tales he restricted himself to other effects, often mystery and terror, and too often pure horror. Poe was interested in many problems and ideas that concern the relation of the soul and the body, — the thought of trance that cannot be distinguished from death, of mesmerism and kindred arts, of the possibility that the body retains something of feeling and thought in the grave; and he was fond of studying various aspects of insanity and morbid psychology. In the tales which are concerned with these themes he often introduced horrible and even repulsive details, — evidently unaware of the effect that they might have on others, as the medical student sometimes forgets that others may be shocked by what are to him the everyday matters of the dissecting room.<sup>1</sup>

Many of Poe's tales are perfunctory writing produced to fill space in the journals of which he was editor, and included in his collected works since his death. There is, however, a large body of better tales, carefully wrought out, and often several times revised. Only a few of these may be mentioned as examples of the way in which the author dealt with favorite ideas. "The Fall of the House of Usher" introduces the thought of the trance indistinguishable from death, and also of a spiritual or mystical relation between

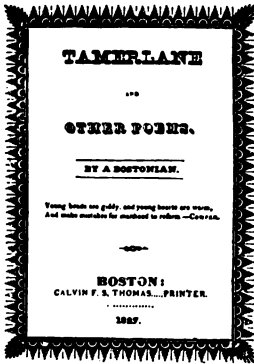
<sup>1</sup> Some critics have held that Poe wrote only for the purpose of making the reader's flesh creep; and many readers are content to get only the thrill of horror from his tales. This is to take an unworthy view of the author. Even in the most horrible of the tales is something besides the horror, a study of some problem or some aspect of human nature. When the horror obscures this, its use must be condemned as an artistic blemish, not praised.

man and material things. "The Descent into the Maelström" and "The Pit and the Pendulum" study a human mind agitated by terrors that come in one case from the forces of nature, in the other from the designs of man. "The Cask of Amontillado," one of the best proportioned of the tales, is one of many studies of diseased or abnormal minds. Another group, including "Ligeia," which Poe considered his best tale, contain fantastic speculations as to the mystery of life and death, and the relation of body and soul. Poe was the originator of the detective story. He wrote three detective stories proper, "The Murders in the Rue Morgue," "The Mystery of Marie Rogêt," and "The Purloined Letter," all of which have the same hero, Dupin, who is accompanied by a friend who tells the story. The same plan has been followed by the writers of detective stories since Poe's day, many of whom have also taken hints from his characters themselves and from his plots. With these tales may also be grouped "The Gold-Bug," a story of the discovery of hidden treasure.<sup>1</sup> The range of Poe's genius as a story-teller may be seen by comparing representatives of the groups of tales last mentioned — say "Ligeia" and "The Gold-Bug." The one presents the extremes of mystical speculation, and recounts occurrences that are made to seem plausible only by throwing a mysterious atmosphere about all, and laying the scene as it were "out of space, out of time." The other tells of an unlikely but physically possible experience, and, like the tales of adventure, secures the appearance of reality by locating the

<sup>1</sup> In this story the location of the treasure is discovered through a cipher memorandum. Poe was interested in cipher writing, and published two or three articles on the subject. It may have been this interest which led to "The Gold-Bug" and the detective stories — tales of ratiocination, Poe called them.

scene definitely, and by giving numbers of homely and realistic details.

In his early years Poe published two long poems, "Tamerlane" and "Al Aaraaf." After he was twenty, however, he wrote nothing in verse, except a fragment of a drama, which did not conform to his theory that a poem should be short, and should produce a single emotional effect. In accordance with his conception of beauty his subjects almost always have an element of sadness — often, as in "To Helen," "The Sleeper," "Annabel Lee," "Ulalume," "The Raven," and others sadness associated with the death of a beautiful and beloved woman. Poe's juvenile versification showed some indebtedness to Byron and to Moore, but he soon developed a poetic manner of his own. Two noticeable peculiarities of his verse were the use of a special poetic vocabulary, and of the repetend — that is, of lines and phrases repeated with varying emphasis and with or without slight variation in meaning.<sup>1</sup> The bulk



Title-page of Poe's first volume of poems.

of Poe's poetry is small. Many of his best poems were revised time after time almost throughout his literary

<sup>1</sup> The most conspicuous examples of favorite words in the poems are proper names, like "Ligeia," "Lenore." Certain words which he employed in but a single passage give the same effect of poetic strangeness — e.g., "scoriae," "boreal," "Yaanek," from "Ulalume." The use of the repetend is seen in "The Raven," more ingeniously if less artistically in "The Bells," and most skillfully of all in "Ulalume" and "Annabel Lee." With this compare the repetition of phrases in Coleridge's "Ancient Mariner."

life. Among those which date in their original forms from a relatively early period were "To Helen," "Israfel," and "The Sleeper." In the last few years of his life he produced another group of poems of which the most notable are "The Raven," "Ulalume," and "Annabel Lee." Each of these presents a single emotional effect, and shows the mastery of verse form which he had attained — a mastery which some readers feel shows too much conscious art, but which was the legitimate aim of a man with his theories of poetry.<sup>1</sup>

Poe was out of harmony with the literary tastes and ideals of his time. Emerson referred to him as "the jingle man," and New Englanders generally felt that as his work taught no definite moral lesson it was of little value. The mass of readers looked on him as an erratic and misguided genius, and for years his name suggested his intemperance and a few of his more obvious and in most instances less excellent works — "The Raven" and "The Bells" in verse, and a few of the tales of excessive horror, such as "The Black Cat." His recognition abroad came more rapidly; and it was partly through the influence of foreign critics, some of whom did not hesitate to call him the greatest American man of letters, that his countrymen came to feel his importance in literary history. He died at the age of forty; and he wrote under great disadvantages, some of which were and

<sup>1</sup> In connection with "The Raven" the student may read "The Philosophy of Composition," which purports to tell how the poem was planned and written. "The Philosophy of Composition" was really a thrust at the "inspiration" theory of poetry, and believers in this theory were somewhat irritated by it, and refused to accept it seriously. Poe did, no doubt, color the facts a little when he told how deliberately and mechanically the poem was constructed, but there seems to be no reason for doubting the essential accuracy of his account.

some of which were not due to his own faults. In his perfunctory and journalistic work there was something of the "sheer fudge"<sup>1</sup> which Lowell mentions so prominently. But he left a considerable body of poems and prose which is purely artistic in conception and workmanship. He showed new possibilities in the music of English verse. He laid down what is still often quoted as the best brief statement of the principles that should govern in the construction of



William Gilmore Simms.

the short story, and he himself wrote a great body of tales which are now classic and which have served as models for many later writers. To-day his position in American literature seems at least as secure as that of any of his contemporaries.

**The Charleston Group**  
— **William Gilmore Simms.** — The most important group of Southern

writers during the mid-century was to be found in Charleston, and numbered among its members WILLIAM GILMORE SIMMS, HENRY TIMROD, and PAUL HAMILTON HAYNE. SIMMS, the oldest and the most important of the group, was born in Charleston in 1806. He received relatively little schooling, and before he was twenty-one had turned his attention first to medicine and then to law, and had finally become an editor.

<sup>1</sup> "There comes Poe with his raven, like Barnaby Rudge,  
Three fifths of him genius, and two fifths sheer fudge."

*Fable for Critics.*



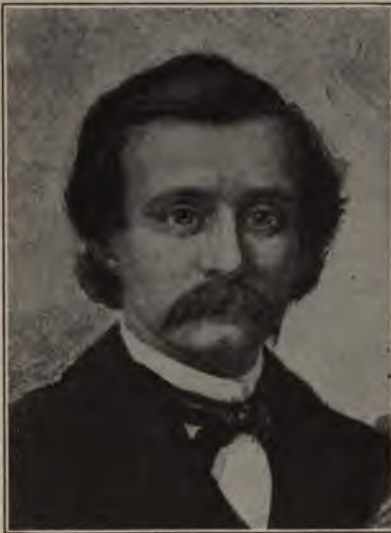
Charleston was a city in which aristocratic tendencies were strong, and as Simms did not belong to the "first families" lack of social recognition probably made more difficult his success in literature. He was an ardent Southerner, and an early advocate of secession.<sup>1</sup> At the same time he was on terms of warm friendship with several Northern writers, among them some of those whose views were most strongly opposed to his own. Like most Southern writers of importance he published much in the North. During the war his house was burned, and as hostilities interrupted relations with his publishers and interfered with the sale of his works his last years were not wholly fortunate or happy.

Throughout his life Simms wrote continuously and hastily — poems, dramas, essays, short tales, and many novels. His poems and dramas are relatively unimportant, though he himself cared much for his reputation as a poet. He was best as an author of prose fiction, in which field he did for the South, roughly speaking, what Cooper did for the North. Most of his frontier tales are melodramatic and bloody. His historical and semihistorical romances of colonial and Revolutionary times are better. The most popular is the *Yemassee*; others of value are the *Partisan* and *Mellichampe*. Simms was by no means a mere imitator of Cooper, but had much original genius as a story-teller. Unfortunately he wrote hastily and carelessly, and even his best romances, though they are well worth the reader's while, are full of artistic crudities.

**Timrod and Hayne.** — During the fifties there gathered about Simms in Charleston a group of younger literary men, chief of whom were the poets Timrod and Hayne. HENRY

<sup>1</sup> Though a civilian his interest in the beginning of military operations was so great that when Fort Sumter was attacked he suggested plans for fortifications, which were adopted.

TIMROD, the son of a Charleston bookbinder, was troubled throughout life by poverty and ill health, both of which were aggravated by his experiences during the war. A volume of his verse was published in Boston in 1860, and after his death in 1867 his works were edited by his friend Hayne.



Henry Timrod.

He was a fiery and emotional poet, and his best work was lyric. Among the most striking passages of his poems are those which express his love for the South, and especially his hatred for her enemies. PAUL HAMILTON HAYNE was perhaps less gifted as a poet, but he was a sweeter and more lovable man. The descendant of an old Southern family, he studied law, but devoted much of his energy to literature. Like Timrod, he suffered severely from

the war, and at its close he retired to a small tract of land near Augusta, Georgia. He published several volumes of musical verse and some miscellaneous work. Like Timrod, he wrote lyrics in support of the Southern cause, but he was less vindictive in temperament, and he accepted the results of the war more calmly.

**Richmond Writers.** — In the literary circles of Richmond the brothers Cooke were of importance. The elder, PHILIP PENDLETON COOKE, was a gentleman and sportsman who

only dabbled in literature. His one volume, *Froissart Ballads, and Other Poems*, was published in 1847. His best-known piece is a sentimental lyric, "Florence Vane." His younger brother, JOHN ESTEN COOKE, wrote romances, particularly romances of Virginia life in the colonial days. His best works are *Leather Stocking and Silk*, *The Virginia Comedians*, and *The Youth of Jefferson*, the two last having some historical elements. His stories are all of the old-fashioned sort in which the heroes are very heroic and the ladies very beautiful, and the love affairs develop through many complications. The REVEREND ABRAM J. RYAN, commonly known as Father Ryan, was also a native of Virginia, though during his service in the Roman Catholic priesthood he lived in various parts of the South. He wrote melodious and genuine religious poems, and a number of finely impassioned lyrics expressing his devotion to the Confederacy. "The Sword of Lee" and "The Conquered Banner" are the most popular.

**Sidney Lanier.** — The most notable Southern writer whose career fell between the close of the war and 1883 was SIDNEY LANIER. Born in Georgia in 1842, and graduated from Oglethorpe College, a small institution in his native state, he enlisted in the Confederate army, where he served in various capacities. After the war he engaged in several occupations, and finally became an assistant in his father's law office. In 1873 he went to Baltimore to devote himself to music and literature.<sup>1</sup> The resolution and the devotion to art involved in this step can be realized only when it is

<sup>1</sup> Baltimore had always been a center of culture, and at this time the intellectual life of the city had received a great impetus from the founding of Johns Hopkins University, an institution which had just attracted many of the foremost scholars of the country to its faculty, and which numbered among its students many younger men who have since become distinguished.

known that he was already afflicted with consumption, that he had a family, and that he was without means except what he earned. He played in an orchestra, did some private teaching, and later some writing that brought small returns. In 1879, two years before his death, he was appointed lecturer in English literature in Johns Hopkins University. All the time that he could spare from labors



Sidney Lanier.

necessary to his support he spent in study and writing. Before he removed to Baltimore he had published only an unimportant novel, *Tiger Lilies*. His first work to attract much attention was a poem, "Corn," which appeared in a Philadelphia magazine in 1875. He edited for boys several of the old romances and did some other similar work, and in 1880 he published a treatise on the *Science of English Verse*. Since

his death some lectures delivered at Johns Hopkins and other miscellaneous writings have been published. With the exception of the *Science of English Verse* these prose writings are relatively unimportant. The novel was rhetorical and strained, and the books for boys, though well done, are really hack work.

It was for his work as a poet that Lanier cared most, and it is as a poet that he deserves to be remembered. It was

his theory, as set forth in the *Science of English Verse*, that the relation between music and poetry is closer than has usually been believed. In his own poems he worked for subtle effects of sound and rhythm, and sometimes seems almost to have cared more for the form than for the idea. He was careful of "tone color," — the choice of vowel sounds to harmonize with the emotion of the poem — and he made free use of alliteration, the repetend, and similar devices. He was fond of long and elaborate figures of speech. Among his most striking and most musical poems of considerable length are "The Symphony," in which he tries to suggest the effect of different musical instruments, and "The Marshes of Glynn," which shows his feeling for nature. He also wrote a number of short, finished, almost epigrammatic poems, of which the "Ballad of Trees and the Master" is typical. All his poems, long and short, show the peculiar, elaborated musical quality for which he worked. His position as the most promising poet of the South, and his connection with a new and conspicuous institution of learning united with the charm of his personality and the pathos of his brave life to win him friends, and to create interest in his writings. It is too soon to be certain what the final verdict on his work will be. Many critics have ranked him among the greater American poets, while others feel that, whatever he might have done if he had lived longer, his actual accomplishment hardly lifts him out of a place with the better minor writers.

## THE WEST

**The Middle West — General Conditions.** — It will be remembered that in the earlier period, while the Alleghanies still formed a serious barrier to travel, the Ohio Valley de-

veloped publishing centers and a literature of its own. With the construction of canals and railroads it became easier for Western writers to publish in the seaboard cities, and for Western readers to secure Eastern books and periodicals; and the distinctive characteristics of literature in Ohio and Kentucky largely disappeared. A few writers, most of them connected with newspapers, continued the traditions established by the earlier pioneers, but are hardly important enough to deserve special mention.<sup>1</sup> The Western spirit and the Western characteristics were not lost to American letters — on the contrary, they were more influential than ever before; but they showed themselves, not in isolated publications in Western towns, but in the great mass of literature which was issued from the cities of the East.

**Some Western Writers.** — STEPHEN C. FOSTER, a resident of Pittsburg and Cincinnati, was the author and composer of a large number of songs which, while not great as poetry or as music, have qualities that touch the heart, and are deservedly popular. Among them are "Old Black Joe," "Old Kentucky Home," "Nellie was a Lady," and, the favorite of all, "Old Folks at Home" ("Way down upon the Swanee Ribber").

To Kentucky and Illinois belongs ABRAHAM LINCOLN, who as writer, and especially as speaker, was one of the greatest American masters of simple, logical, convincing prose, and who knew how to give such prose the dignity and emotional force which commands the feelings as well as the intellects of men. He has as much simplicity and direct-

<sup>1</sup> Among the more important of these Ohio Valley writers were George D. Prentice, a Connecticut man, who long edited the *Louisville Journal* and who wrote poems and clever prose paragraphs; William D. Gallagher, who held various editorial positions in Cincinnati and Louisville, and also wrote poetry; and Henry M. Brackenridge, son of H. H. Brackenridge, who wrote in prose.

ness as Franklin, more of rhythm and finish, more sense of form and proportion. Careful analysis shows the "Gettys-



*By Gutzon Borglum*

Statue of Abraham Lincoln in Newark, N. J.

burg Address" to be almost perfect structurally, yet it was a wholly spontaneous utterance. Lincoln excelled Franklin, too, in diversity of humor, and in the ability to appeal to

the higher natures of men as well as to their prudence. Though much has been said of his indebtedness to the Bible and other books which he read in youth, his style, like that of other self-trained men, is an expression of his personality. His personality, in turn, is representative of what was best in the free, active, humorous, intelligent pioneer. His manner was in many respects the opposite of that of Webster, Choate, Everett, and other great orators of the more cultured regions, and since the days of his debate with Douglas, the Gettysburg Address, and the Second Inaugural Address standards



Lincoln's birthplace.

of American oratory have been wholly different from what they were before.

In the latter part of the period Indiana produced a number of writers. These were not in any way bound together as a

“school.” The REVEREND EDWARD EGGLESTON did missionary work in Indiana and Minnesota which furnished material for his novels, *The Hoosier Schoolmaster*, *The Circuit Rider*, and others. Eggleston also wrote history, and the artistic effect of his stories is sometimes marred by the historian's attempt to make incidents and descriptions of nature and of character strictly accurate. At one time his works were very popular, and they are still valuable for their portrayal of conditions of life that have passed away. GENERAL LEW WALLACE, an Indianapolis lawyer and politician, is known chiefly as the author of *Ben-Hur, a Tale of the*



*Christ*, a novel which has conspicuous defects, but which is vivid in its descriptions and sometimes dramatic in action. His earlier novel, *The Fair God*, is a story of the conquest of Mexico. Several later works, written after *Ben-Hur* had won him popular recognition, are less valuable. JOHN HAY, who held many political positions, among them those of private secretary to President Lincoln, ambassador to England, and secretary of state under President McKinley, was also a native of Indiana. His writings were various and were in both prose and verse. The *Pike County Ballads* are in crude Western dialect, and present some of the Western philosophy of life. The most popular are "Jim Bludso" and "Little Breeches." *Castilian Days* is based on the author's observations in Spain; and a novel, *The Breadwinners*, published anonymously, is a study of certain conditions of American life.

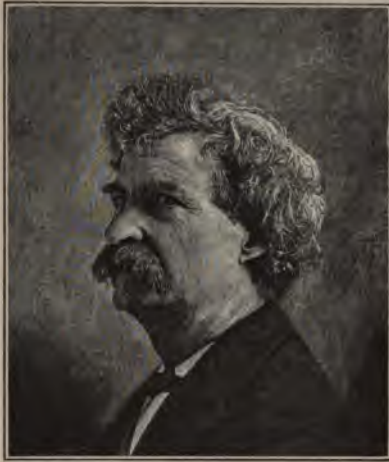


John Hay.

**Western Humorists — Mark Twain.** — The free and active life of the West has always been favorable to the development of humor. Humor was an important ingredient in the character of a man like Lincoln, and humor alone has made the reputations of a number of Western writers. HENRY W. SHAW, who used the pen name "Josh Billings," lived for twenty years in the Middle West, and was essentially a Western character, though most of his writing was actually done in the East. Josh Billings's "sayings" are brief proverbs and epigrams, many of which would seem

rather flat if they did not attract attention by their bad spelling.

Far greater than the newspaper humorists was SAMUEL LANGHORNE CLEMENS, better known as "Mark Twain."<sup>1</sup> He was born in Missouri, of Virginia ancestry, in 1835, and spent most of his boyhood in the town of Hannibal on the Mississippi River. By



Mark Twain.

the time that he was thirty-two years of age he had served as a printer in various places East and West, as steamboat pilot on the lower Mississippi, and as miner, prospector, speculator, newspaper man, and lecturer in Nevada and California. After these varied experiences in the most distinctive regions of the West, he went East, where some slight reputation as a

humorist had preceded him. In 1867 he joined an excursion to Europe and the Holy Land, and wrote back the series of newspaper letters which were afterward revised and published as *Innocents Abroad*. After his return he lived in the East, with frequent visits to Europe, and

<sup>1</sup> "Mark Twain" is a call used on Mississippi steamboats when the river is being sounded, and signifies two fathoms (twelve feet) of water. It was occasionally used as a pen name by Captain Sellers, a river pilot of an older generation than that to which Clemens belonged. The latter did not adopt it for himself until after he had left the river and gone to the Pacific slope.



Mark Twain's boyhood home.

devoted himself to writing. Unfortunate investments left him at one time heavily in debt, but by literary work and lecturing he paid all obligations, including those from which he had been legally released, and amassed a considerable property besides. Late in life he was recognized as a conspicuous figure, and received many honors, including the degree of D.C.L. from Oxford.<sup>1</sup>

Mark Twain made his first reputation as a humorist. *Innocents Abroad* has some fine descriptive passages, but its great popularity was due to its humor — humor better in quality than that of the average newspaper “funny man,” but not essentially different in kind. Some critics have named as the chief characteristics of native American humor exaggeration and irreverence. *Innocents Abroad* abounds in both these qualities, but especially in irreverence, using this word in a broad sense.<sup>2</sup> Even places with the most sacred associations, and the greatest works of art were not always safe from his fun, but usually he confined his attacks to shams and relics of doubtful authenticity, or ridiculed not so much the things themselves as the affected and sentimental enthusiasm which travelers try to feel in their presence. Mark Twain had a characteristic Western hatred of sham and affectation which, if not always con-

<sup>1</sup> Among Mark Twain's more important works were *The Celebrated Jumping Frog* (1867), *Innocents Abroad* (1869), *Roughing It* (1872), *Tom Sawyer* (1876), *A Tramp Abroad* (1880), *The Prince and the Pauper* (1882), *Life on the Mississippi* (1883), *Huckleberry Finn* (1884), *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court* (1889), *The American Claimant* (1892), *The £1,000,000 Bank-Note* (1893), *Pudd'nhead Wilson* (1894), *Personal Recollections of Joan of Arc* (1896), *Following the Equator* (1897). *The Gilded Age* is a story written in collaboration with Charles Dudley Warner.

<sup>2</sup> Among famous passages illustrating this quality are the adventure with the Genoa guide, Vol. I, Chap. XXVII, and the meditation at the tomb of Adam, Vol. II, Chap. XXVI.

sistent, was sound and manly. In his later years he took himself rather seriously as a philosopher, and grew fond of delivering his opinions on all sorts of subjects — international copyright, foreign missions, Christian Science, the foreign policy of the United States, and many more. In many cases his attitude was too extreme and his attacks were too vehemently bitter to command serious respect from those who did not already agree with him. On the whole, his views and theories had most weight when he expressed them incidentally in his romances and humorous works. *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court*, an extravagant but cleverly planned burlesque, is really a condemnation of Chivalry, which was one of his chief aversions. In *Joan of Arc*, historical fiction on which he expended much careful labor, he also expresses many of his social theories.

Those who care most for Mark Twain's sheer fun consider that he was at his best in *Innocents Abroad*, *Roughing It*, and similar works, many of them written early. Those who credit him with great importance as a thinker on social questions give first place to some of his later books, particularly the *Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court* and *Joan of Arc*. The majority of readers, however, feel that his most valuable work was done in the middle period, and is to be found in *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*, *Life on the Mississippi*, and *Huckleberry Finn*. There is much autobiographical material in all these works. *Tom Sawyer* and *Huckleberry Finn* tell of life in a Southern river town as the author knew it in his boyhood, and *Life on the Mississippi* is based on his experiences as a pilot. There is much humor in all these; and there is much serious, accurate, and appreciative description of the moods and aspects of the great river that Mark Twain knew and loved so well. There is much, too, that shows how well he knew life and

understood human nature,<sup>1</sup> and there are only occasional glimpses of the bitterness and unfairness that characterize some of his later work. *Pudd'nhead Wilson*, a later romance with the scene laid in the Mississippi Valley, has some of the same characteristics as *Tom Sawyer* and *Huckleberry Finn*, but neither the story nor the execution are so satisfactory.

Roughly speaking, American humorists may be divided into two groups. One group, which includes Irving, Holmes, and not quite so completely Lowell, shows in its humor the constant influence of culture, and conforms to the manner of expression that prevails in the literature of the past, and in the more restrained circles of society. The other, which includes Artemus Ward and a host of lesser newspaper humorists, depends on exaggeration and irreverence, on studied drollery, and on the qualities that characterize the banter and give and take of men unrestrained by social conventions. Mark Twain stands at the head of the latter group, and he has done more than any other man to show that this form of humor may be worthy of respectful attention as literature. He was, however, more than a humorist. While future generations may decide that his deliberate philosophizing is of little value, his keenness of observation and his feeling for some aspects of nature, and his understanding of men, give his better works a value that could never be derived from mere fun, however clever.

**The Pacific Slope — General Conditions.** — During the time between the discovery of gold in 1848 and the completion of the first transcontinental railroad in 1869 the Pacific slope was an active and fast developing section of the coun-

<sup>1</sup> Every boy and every one who knows boys recognizes the essential truth to boy nature that underlies the exaggeration in such passages as that in which Tom Sawyer permits his friends to white-wash the fence.

try, cut off from easy communication with older centers of culture. Here, as earlier in the Ohio Valley under similar circumstances, was developed a distinctive literature of some importance. Several magazines were founded in San Francisco, one of them, the *Overland*, attaining a considerable reputation. Mark Twain had some associations with the San Francisco group.

**Bret Harte.** — The most distinctive of the California writers was (FRANCIS) BRET HARTE.<sup>1</sup> Born in New York State in 1839, he went West at the age of fifteen, and spent his most impressionable years in a variety of occupations, — miner, tax collector, express messenger, drug clerk, and printer. He early took to writing and in 1868 became the first editor of the *Overland Monthly*. It was in this magazine that he published "The Luck of Roaring Camp," "The Outcasts of Poker Flat," and other tales which quickly won him recognition, particularly in the older sections of the country. California, which was somewhat sensitive over any charges of social crudity,



Bret Harte.

<sup>1</sup> Soon after he began to be known as a writer he dropped his first name, Francis, and thereafter always signed himself Bret Harte.

did not fully approve of his portrayals of Western life, and in 1871 he went East, never to return. From 1878 to 1880 he held a United States consulate in Germany, and from that time until his death in 1902 he lived in Great Britain.

Harte wrote a novel, *Gabriel Conroy*, a drama, *Two Men of Sandy Bar*, and two series of *Condensed Novels*, burlesques or parodies on popular writers of fiction. All these have some excellences, but are relatively unimportant. The great bulk of his work was in short prose tales. The best of these were written while he was in California and immediately after he went East. They deal with Western scenes, and portray the varied, rude, but genuine life of the mining camp and the frontier settlement, in which men of all nationalities, all degrees of culture, and all grades of morals mingled. They are not written with a didactic purpose, but they show the author's optimistic belief that there are some elements of good in the most evil characters. They have a touch of sentimentality and of melodrama, imitated from the less admirable qualities of the author's favorite novelist, Dickens, but the best of them are after all essentially true and genuine, and rank among the best short tales written in America. After he went abroad Harte continued to write profusely on this rude Western life, repeating himself somewhat, and never equaling his early work.

Bret Harte also wrote a considerable number of poems, some like "Plain Talk from Truthful James,"<sup>1</sup> and "The Society upon the Stanislaus" humorous, others, like "Her Letter," sentimental. He was by no means a great poet, but he was a smooth and pleasing versifier, and often showed real feeling. Harte had many defects, and his fame must rest on only a small part of what he wrote; but a few of his

<sup>1</sup> Usually known as "The Heathen Chinese."



best stories, and perhaps a few of his poems, entitle him to a definite place in a history of American literature.

**Other Writers of the Far West.** — Among California writers of slightly later date was EDWARD ROWLAND SILL, a Yale graduate and a teacher of English literature in the Oakland (Cal.) high school and the University of California. His work was in prose and verse, the latter being the more important. His poems are mostly short and personal, and appeal strongly

to those whose mental experiences have been similar to those of the author. A very different type of man was CINCINATUS HINER MILLER, who made use of the pen name "Joaquin Miller."



Joaquin Miller on his estate.

He was born in Indiana, but removed to the Pacific slope when he was a boy, and lived there a great part of his life. His most distinctive writings are on Western themes, as may be inferred from such titles as *Songs of the Sierras*, *Songs of the Sunlands*, *Songs of the Desert*, *Songs of the Mexican Seas*. About 1870 he visited England, and his poems were praised with what has since seemed considerable extravagance by some of the better English critics. He is at his best in poems that show his feeling for the grander aspects of nature as seen in the West. A few pieces, like his lyric "Columbus," are strong

and well sustained; but most of his work is imitative, strained, and rhetorical, and there was an element of pose about the man and his writings that interfered with the highest success.



Helen Hunt Jackson.

In some of her later writings MRS. HELEN HUNT JACKSON, who signed herself "H. H.," had some connection with California, but she perhaps belongs more properly to Colorado. She wrote verse and a variety of miscellaneous prose, but is best in her stories and novels. She was greatly interested in the wrongs of the Indians,<sup>1</sup> and *Ramona*, a novel with a southern California setting, is largely devoted to

the portrayal of their treatment by the whites.

#### GENERAL SUMMARY

The central years of the nineteenth century were indeed the period of greatest achievement in American literature, and of achievement so varied and complex that it cannot be summarized in brief. A good number of writers continued the work previously begun by Irving and Cooper of winning for American literature respectful recognition abroad. If

<sup>1</sup> Mrs. Jackson's treatise on this subject, *A Century of Dishonor*, attracted great attention and is still read by those interested in the Indian question, but is of little literary value.

we are in danger of being overpatriotic, it is well to remember that American authors did not quite equal their English contemporaries — that America produced no poets so good as Tennyson and Browning, or novelists so good as Dickens and Thackeray, or essayists so good as Newman, Carlyle, Ruskin, and Arnold. Still, in all the branches of literature that these men represent Americans made world-wide reputations, several of which promise to be lasting.

In the period under consideration the New England spirit, which had been developing for two centuries, reached its culmination, so to speak, and exerted its strongest and best influence on literature. Six of the greatest writers of the period, and many who were a little less great, were born, trained, and passed their lives in the region where their devout ancestors had settled in the early seventeenth century. These men had all departed far from the Puritan creed, but all of them showed to a considerable degree the influence of Puritanism. It should not be inferred from this fact that they were painfully narrow, or that the provincialism which some of them showed was greatly to their disadvantage. Partly because they responded to influences from other sections of the country, partly because New Englanders had diffused themselves so widely throughout the Middle and Western states, these writers were to a great extent representative of the entire North, and to some extent of the entire country. In all sections of the United States were persons who liked their literature to be moral, didactic, and mildly sentimental; and an excess of moralizing, didacticism, and sentimentality is the worst of the literary sins which can be charged against the New Englanders. On the other hand, many of their excellences — their purity of thought, their earnestness, their devotion to the democratic

idea, and their interest in the common man — are qualities which most Americans regard as national.

While there was no other very distinctive school of American writers, men in different sections of the country, and particularly Poe and Whitman, opposed somewhat the tendencies of the New Englanders. Poe objected particularly to their didacticism, and emphasized the idea that literature, and especially poetry, was an art whose sufficient end was spiritual pleasure. Whitman objected to the conventionality of form and subject, and favored greater freedom of all sorts in literature. Poe and Whitman differed as widely in their conceptions of poetry as two men could, yet the criticisms of both have been productive of good results. The more important of the other New York writers, several of whom, it may be remembered, were of New England birth, agreed with Poe in regarding literature as an art, though they did not agree with his special theories. Southerners, on the whole, both the somewhat amateurish poets before the war, and later Lanier, took a similar view. The influence of the West, particularly of the Far West, was for greater freedom in choice of subjects and expression, though Western writers were not actuated by any such theories as those of Whitman.

The New Englanders of the mid-century were the last great sectional group of American writers. New England and the old South were long the two parts of the country in which the original colonizing stock remained with the least admixture of foreign elements, but after the Civil War conditions changed in both. New England, in particular, attracted many immigrants from abroad, and also drew to her centers of culture men from other parts of America. Boston and Harvard College ceased to belong exclusively to the descendants of the Puritans. Even the *Atlantic Monthly* passed in 1872 into the editorial charge of a native of the

Middle West,<sup>1</sup> and for a time, in the succeeding period, into that of a Southerner. As facilities for communication increased writers in all parts of the country found themselves in closer connection with the great centers of the Atlantic seaboard, and American literature became more homogeneous, more truly national, than ever before. Within less than twenty years after the close of the Civil War sectionalism, as it had existed in American writings for two centuries and a half, had almost disappeared.

#### READINGS AND TOPICS

*General Suggestions.* — As in the study of earlier periods the student should keep in mind the course of American history and of English literature. He should also take pains to note literary relationships. Discussions of the period may be found in Cairns, *A History of American Literature*, Chapter IV, Trent, *A History of American Literature*, pp. 285-579; and Wendell, *A Literary History of America*, pp. 204-513. Among other reference works that may be useful are Whitcomb, *Chronological Outlines of American Literature*, Brownell, *American Prose Masters*, Stedman, *Poets of America*, Erskine, *Leading American Novelists*, Payne, *Leading American Essayists*, Howe, *American Bookmen*, Page, *Chief American Poets*.

Selections from most of the lesser writers mentioned may be found in Stedman & Hutchinson's *Library of American Literature*, and from the poets in Stedman's *American Anthology*. Many of the poets are also represented in Bronson's *American Poems*, Lounsbury's *Yale Book of American Verse*, and other anthologies.

#### NEW ENGLAND

*Suggestions for Reading.* — For gossip and miscellaneous information regarding literary New England see Higginson, *Cheerful Yesterdays*, Old Cambridge, Howells, *My Literary Friends and Acquaintances*, Stearnes, *Cambridge Sketches*, *Sketches from Concord*

<sup>1</sup> William Dean Howells. Howells had been assistant editor since 1866.

and Appledore. For the history of Brook Farm see Swift, *Brook Farm*, Annie E. Russell, *Home Life of the Brook Farm Association*, and for a vivid though of course not an accurate portrayal Hawthorne's *Blithedale Romance*.

The authorized life of EMERSON is Cabot's. Good brief biographies are those of Holmes, Garnett, Sanborn. Almost any good library will contain much about Emerson, but it is better to confine reading mostly to his own works. "Self-Reliance" and "Friendship" are good essays for beginners in Emerson. A representative list of the poems would include: "Each and All," "The Problem," "The Sphinx," "Hamatreya," "The Rhodora," "The Humble Bee," "The Snow-Storm," "Woodnotes," "Fable," "Days," "Dirge," "The Romany Girl," "The Informing Spirit," "The Concord Hymn." The interested student should also explore the "Quatrains" and "Fragments."

The biographies of THOREAU by Sanborn and by Salt are the best, though neither is wholly satisfactory. Those who have time would do well to read all of *Walden*; when this is impossible, the chapters on "Economy," "Sounds," "Visitors," may be suggested. Those who wish to continue their reading in Thoreau farther may turn next to *The Maine Woods*, *Cape Cod*. MARGARET FULLER and ALCOCK hardly repay much study except to the special student. The *Memoir* of the former by Emerson, Clarke, and Channing contains much valuable material.

The abolitionist writers other than Whittier, Lowell, and Mrs. Stowe hardly call for much attention, but those who wish may consult W. P. and F. J. Garrison, *Life of Garrison*, Austin's *Life and Times of Wendell Phillips*, and read selections from the works of these men. Among the more famous of Phillips's speeches are "The Murder of Lovejoy," "The Burial of John Brown," "Toussaint l'Ouverture."

The standard life of WHITTIER is Pickard's; the best brief life is Carpenter's. The following list contains representatives of the different classes of Whittier's poems: "Proem," "The Angels of Buena Vista," "Maud Muller," "Skipper Ireson's Ride," "Telling the Bees," "Mabel Martin," "My Playmate," "The Sisters," "The River Path," "The Vanishers," "A Sea Dream," "Sunset on the Bearcamp," "Ichabod," "The Lost Occasion," "Centennial Hymn," "The Tent on the Beach" ("Introduction," "The

Wreck of the Rivermouth"), "The Hunters of Men," "Massachusetts to Virginia," "Barbara Frietchie," "Laus Deo," "The Poor Voter on Election Day," "Memories," "The Barefoot Boy," "Snow-Bound," "In School Days," "The Eternal Goodness," "Our Master." Those who wish representative passages of the prose may read "Yankee Gypsies," "The Fish I didn't Catch," and selections from *Margaret Smith's Journal*.

The standard life of LOWELL is Scudder's; Underwood's and Hale's biographies are satisfactory; Hale's *James Russell Lowell and his Friends* is a pleasing, gossipy book. The best way to get an idea of Lowell the man is to dip here and there in his Letters. The following list contains representative poems: "Summer Storm," "To a Pine-Tree," "The Present Crisis," "She Came and Went," "The Changeling," "Beaver Brook," "To W. L. Garrison," "The Vision of Sir Launfal," "The Fable for Critics" (criticisms of a few American authors), "For an Autograph," "Auf Wiedersehen," "Palinode," "After the Burial," "Harvard Commemoration Ode," "Agassiz," "Phcebe," "Monna Lisa," "In the Twilight." From the *Biglow Papers* the student should read some at least of the preliminary and introductory material to Series I, and selections, e.g., Nos. I, II, and III, Series I, and Nos. II, VI, and X, Series II. Three of Lowell's most delightful informal essays are "My Garden Acquaintance," "A Good Word for Winter," and "On a Certain Condescension in Foreigners." The lecture on "Democracy" is representative of his later political utterances, and any selection from the volume of *Political Essays* may be chosen as showing his earlier manner. In subject the paper on "Abraham Lincoln" is as attractive as any. The literary essays are for readers already familiar with the author discussed, rather than for novices, and the student who reads from them should make his own selection with this fact in mind.

None of the biographies of Mrs. STOWE is wholly satisfactory. As in case of other novelists, selections are not very valuable. Those who are not already familiar with *Uncle Tom's Cabin* should become so if possible. The other works of Mrs. Stowe that best repay study are *Old Town Folks* and *The Minister's Wooing*.

The standard life of LONGFELLOW is that by the poet's brother, Samuel Longfellow. Shorter lives by Carpenter, Higginson, Robertson, Underwood, and Kennedy are satisfactory. The

following poems, most of which will doubtless be familiar to the student, are representative: "Hymn to the Night," "The Psalm of Life," "The Reaper and the Flowers," "The Beleaguered City," "The Skeleton in Armor," "The Wreck of the Hesperus," "The Village Blacksmith," "The Rainy Day," "Excelsior," "The Slave's Dream," "Rain in Summer," "The Bridge," "The Day is Done," "The Old Clock on the Stairs," "The Arrow and the Song," "Evangeline," "The Building of the Ship," "Seaweed," "Resignation," "The Builders," "Hiawatha" (selections, e.g., Introduction, Sections I, VII, X), "The Courtship of Miles Standish," "My Lost Youth," "Children," "The Children's Hour," "Tales of a Wayside Inn" (Introduction, "Paul Revere's Ride," "King Robert of Sicily"), "Divina Commedia," "Jugurtha." Those who wish to sample the prose may dip into *Outre-Mer* and *Hyperion*, noticing the differences between the two.

The best biography of HAWTHORNE is that by Woodberry; Carpenter's and Henry James's lives are also good; *Nathaniel Hawthorne and his Wife*, by Julian Hawthorne, contains much material. The following lists of short selections are representative: From the *Twice Told Tales*, "The Gray Champion," "Sundays at Home," "The Maypole of Merry Mount," "Mr. Higginbotham's Catastrophe," "The Great Carbuncle," "David Swan," "Sights from a Steeple," "Dr. Heidegger's Experiment," "Lady Eleanore's Mantle"; from the *Mosses from an Old Manse*, "The Old Manse," "The Birthmark," "Young Goodman Brown," "Rappaccini's Daughter," "The Celestial Railroad," "Feathertop," "Drowne's Wooden Image," "The Old Apple Dealer"; from *The Snow Image and other Twice Told Tales*, "The Snow Image," "The Great Stone Face," "Ethan Brand"; from the stories for children, "The Gorgon's Head," "The Golden Fleece," selections from *Grandfather's Chair*. Those who have time should read one of the romances, preferably the *Scarlet Letter*. Excursions into the *Note-Books*, especially the *American Note-Books*, are profitable for those who would know more of the author and his methods of work.

The standard life of HOLMES is that by Morse. The following list of Holmes's poems is representative: "Old Ironsides," "The Last Leaf," "The Last Reader," "Lexington," "On Lending a Punch Bowl," "The Parting Word," "A Rhymed Lesson," "The Voiceless," "The Living Temple," "Brother Jonathan's Lament



for Sister Caroline," "Bill and Joe," "The Boys," "The Chambered Nautilus," "The Deacon's Masterpiece," "Under the Violets," "Hymn of Trust," "Aunt Tabitha," "Dorothy Q.," "Grandmother's Story of Bunker Hill," "The Broomstick Train." The best of the volumes of informal essays is the *Autocrat*. Those who have not time for all may make their own selections, almost at random. From the novels *Elsie Venner* should be the first choice, and *The Guardian Angel* the second.

Readings in the lesser New England authors should be determined by the student's taste as well as by the time at his disposal. Brief biographical sketches, such as may be found in Appleton's *Cyclopedia of American Biography* and other works of reference, will in most cases be ample. There is some gossip information about other writers in Field's *Yesterdays with Authors*. From Parsons every student should read "On a Bust of Dante" and "Paradisi Gloria." Two representative poems of W. W. Story are "Cleopatra" and "Praxiteles and Phryne." It is to be hoped that most students are already familiar with some of Louisa M. Alcott's and of J. T. Trowbridge's delightful stories. Donald G. Mitchell's *Reveries of a Bachelor* is well worth reading, and so are some of Charles Dudley Warner's essays, such as those gathered in the volumes *As we were saying*, *My Summer in a Garden*, and *Being a Boy*. Every educated American should know something of the four greater New England historians, Bancroft, Prescott, Motley, and Parkman, but their representative works are too long to read in an elementary course in literature. Selections, such as may be found in Stedman & Hutchinson's *Library of American Literature*, may be profitable, especially from Parkman; and all who care for accounts of adventure should read *The Oregon Trail*. Those who have time will find it interesting and profitable to read one or more of Parkman's historical volumes complete. The Conspiracy of Pontiac is typical. Sumner's address "On the True Grandeur of Nations" and some of his political speeches, and some of Choate's orations may be commended to those especially interested in oratory. Any available selections from "Artemus Ward" will give an idea of his humor. Any student who has not already done so should surely read Hale's *The Man without a Country*, and if he wishes may follow this by *My Double and How he Undid Me*, or by some of Hale's essays. Those who wish an

acquaintance with Higginson may at the same time gain information about other writers by reading such works as *Old Cambridge*, *James Russell Lowell and his Friends*, etc. Dana's *Two Years Before the Mast* is, like *The Oregon Trail*, a classic account of adventure which any right-minded boy will surely enjoy, and Thompson's *The Green Mountain Boys*, while in the old-fashioned manner, is well worth while. It should hardly be necessary to add to the list of readings "My country, 'tis of thee," and "The Battle Hymn of the Republic."

*Suggestions for Papers and Topics.* — Those who have access to a file of the *Atlantic Monthly* may make a study of the early volumes, or compare them with recent magazines. (The authors of articles in these volumes are given, so far as known, in *The Atlantic Index, 1857-1888.*) An interesting paper may be prepared on Life at Brook Farm (see references above). The literary environs of Boston, or more limited topics, such as Cambridge, Concord, Salem, etc., may be made the subjects of interesting reports, especially if pictures are available for illustration. (There is a wealth of material for such papers; see, for example, *Homes of American Authors*, — reprinted as *Little Journeys to the Homes of American Authors*, — Stoddard, *Poets' Homes*, Higginson, *Old Cambridge*, Winsor, *Memorial History of Boston*, Swaine, *The Story of Concord told by Concord Writers*, etc.)

Suggested topics on Emerson: What message I get from Emerson's essays; Why, according to Emerson, should one be self-reliant? Why was Emerson a good lecturer? A collection of quotable sentences from Emerson's prose; Emerson's poems on nature (compared, if desired, with those of some other poet); Emerson's use of homely illustrations in prose and poetry; Emerson's life in Concord. (See biographies of Emerson, and books on Concord listed above.)

Suggested topics on Thoreau: What sort of man was Thoreau (his character as seen in his writings); Camping all the year round (based on *Walden*); Thoreau as a minute and accurate observer (cite passages from his works); Thoreau's humor; Thoreau's essays on nature compared with those of, e.g., Burroughs.

Suggested topics on Margaret Fuller, Alcott (profitable only to those specially interested): What Margaret Fuller's contemporaries thought of her (Consult the *Memoir* by Emerson, Channing, and

Clarke, and, by use of the indexes, Emerson's *Journals*, Hawthorne's *Note Books*, Lowell's *Letters*, etc.); An early Women's Rights tract (*Woman in the Nineteenth Century*); A study of some of the "Orphic Sayings"; The Fruitlands experiment (See Sanborn and Harris's *Memoir of Alcott*, II, pp. 372-391).

Suggested topics on the abolitionists: Students especially interested in American history may prepare a topic on Garrison and the *Liberator*, or on Phillips as an orator.

Suggested topics on Whittier: Whittier's home, and its reflection in his poems (See Pickard, *Whittier-Land*, and numerous references in Page, *Chief American Poets*); Whittier's treatment of the Quakers (chiefly in the verse, but see also references in *Margaret Smith's Journal*, etc.); Whittier's treatment of themes from old New England life; Whittier's personal poems; Whittier as a teller of stories in verse; Whittier's treatment of New England country life; A study of Whittier's antislavery poems; A comparison between "Snow-Bound" and "The Cotter's Saturday Night"; A comparison of "Snow-Bound" and Bryant's "The Snow-Storm," Emerson's "The Snow-Storm," Lowell's "The First Snow-Fall," etc.

Suggested topics on Lowell: Lowell and Elmwood (See Higginson, *Old Cambridge*, and many references in Page); Lowell's character as shown in his letters; A comparison of Lowell's and Whittier's antislavery poems; Lowell's poems on nature (compared if desired with those of some other poet); Lowell's personal poems; New England elements in Lowell's work; Lowell's humor; Moralizing in Lowell's poems; A study of the "Vision of Sir Launfal"; The "Vision of Sir Launfal" compared with stories of the Grail in Tennyson's "Idyls of the King"; A comparison of the *Biglow Papers* with later political satire, e.g., "Mr. Dooley"; In what does the charm of Lowell's informal essays consist? "My Garden Acquaintance" compared with passages from Thoreau.

Suggested topics on Mrs. Stowe: Why is *Uncle Tom's Cabin* still read? Character portrayal in *Uncle Tom's Cabin*; Humor and pathos in *Uncle Tom's Cabin*.

Suggested topics on Longfellow: Longfellow and Craigie House (See Stoddard, *Poets' Homes*, Higginson, *Old Cambridge, Homes of American Authors*, and references in Page, *Chief American Poets*); Longfellow's treatment of American themes; Longfellow's poems

of slavery compared with Whittier's; Longfellow's descriptions of nature compared with Whittier's; with Lowell's — (Choose a few from each author and make the comparisons definite); The moralizing element in Longfellow's poems; Longfellow as a poet of the children; Evidence of European influence in Longfellow's poems; "Evangeline" (the story, the descriptions, the truth to history); A study of some of Longfellow's verse forms; My first acquaintance with Longfellow; or, What Longfellow meant to me when I was in the grades; Comparison of *Outre-Mer* and the *Sketch Book*; Differences between *Outre-Mer* and *Hyperion*.

Suggested topics on Hawthorne: Hawthorne's homes and haunts (See Hawthorne's own description of The Old Manse, and of the Salem custom house in the introduction to the *Scarlet Letter*; *Bridge, Personal Recollections of Hawthorne*; Rose Hawthorne Lathrop, *Memories of Hawthorne*; *Homes of American Authors*, etc.); Hawthorne's choice of old New England subjects; Hawthorne's handling of the supernatural (compare with that of Irving); Suggestiveness and symbolism in the tales and romances; The element of mystery in Hawthorne's tales (Find tales in which there is a mysterious element. For what is it used? Is it cleared up at the end?); The moralizing element in Hawthorne's tales (Find stories which teach morals. Is the moral definitely expressed? Does the moralizing tend to spoil the tale?); Do Hawthorne's characters seem real? (Is the character lifelike?); Hints for stories in the *American Note-Books* (List both those which the author developed into stories, and those which he never used); A study of Hawthorne's descriptions; Do children to-day enjoy the *Tangle-Wood Tales*, etc.? Why, or Why not?

Suggested topics on Holmes: Humor and pathos in Holmes's poems; The blending of humor and pathos in "The Last Leaf" and "The Boys"; What evidence in Holmes's writings that the author was a physician? A study of the "Poems of the Class of '29"; Holmes's patriotic poems; The conception and plan of the *Autocrat* (Why did Holmes choose a boarding-house for the scene? Why the breakfast table rather than the dinner table? etc.); A study of ten selected pages of the *Autocrat*, listing the subjects touched upon and searching out the allusions, etc.; A study of *Elsie Venner*.

Suggested papers and topics on minor authors: Papers, apprecia-

tive and personally reminiscent, may be prepared on What is enjoyable in the stories of Miss Alcott, or of Trowbridge; or one may study New England life as portrayed in Miss Alcott's stories. Other suggested topics are: A study of *Reveries of a Bachelor* (compared if desired with other informal essays, e.g., Lamb's, Holmes's); A study of one of Charles Dudley Warner's volumes; *The Oregon Trail* compared with fictitious narratives of Western adventure (e.g., Cooper's); The habits and characteristics of the Indians as shown in one of Parkman's historical works; What is funny in the writings of "Artemus Ward"? A comparison between Ward and Lowell as humorists, Ward and Mark Twain; How does the author make "The Man without a Country" seem real? Some interesting gleanings about New England writers from Higginson's *Old Cambridge*; *Two Years before the Mast* compared with novels of sea life (e.g., Cooper's); American patriotic songs of the central period (history, sentiments expressed, tunes to which they are sung, etc.; include "Hail Columbia," "My country, 'tis of thee," "Battle Hymn of the Republic," "Dixie," "Maryland, My Maryland," "John Brown's Body," etc.).

#### THE MIDDLE STATES

*Suggestions for Reading.* — The best brief biographies of WHITMAN are those by Perry and by Carpenter. Symonds, *Walt Whitman; a Study*, Burroughs's, *Whitman; a Study*, and several other discussions of Whitman's significance are important, but are hardly for beginners. A few poems are named in the note on page 219, and the following list is fairly representative: "One's-Self I Sing," "In Cabin'd Ships at Sea," "I hear America Singing," "Crossing Brooklyn Ferry," "Song of the Broad-Axe," "Pioneers! O Pioneers!" "Out of the Cradle Endlessly Rocking," "Tears," "To the Man-of-War Bird," "Beat! Beat! Drums," "Give me the Splendid Silent Sun," "When Lilacs Last in the Door-Yard Bloomed," "O Captain! My Captain!" "Darest thou now, O Soul," "Night on the Prairies," "The Voice of the Rain." Those who wish to make the acquaintance of Whitman's prose had best begin with *Specimen Days*, selecting from the table of contents items of interest, particularly those that have to do with the author's army hospital experiences.

William Winter is best seen in his *Gray Days and Gold*, his writings

on the American stage, and his late volume of reminiscences, *Old Friends*. Those who care for weirdly imaginative stories will enjoy O'Brien's "What Was It? a Mystery," "The Diamond Lens," and "The Wondersmith."

There is a life of STEDMAN by Laura Stedman and George M. Gould, and one of ALDRICH by Greenslet, but the student will hardly make much use of either. The following lists of poems are representative:

From Stedman: "Kearny at Seven Pines," "Treason's last Device," "Pan in Wall Street," "The Doorstep," "Country Sleighing," "Toujours Amour," "Stanzas for Music," "Falstaff's Song," "The Hand of Lincoln."

From Stoddard: "How are songs begot and bred?" "The Flight of Youth," "The Sea (Storm)," "Birds," "November," "In the market-place one day," "Abraham Lincoln," "A Catch," "An Old Song Reversed."

From Aldrich: "Baby Bell," "Nocturne," "An Untimely Thought," "Hereditry," "Unguarded Gates," "Two Moods," "Prescience," "Guilielmus Rex," "I vex me not with brooding on the years." From Aldrich's prose read *The Story of a Bad Boy*, and as representatives of his short stories "Marjory Daw," "Quite So," "Mademoiselle Olympe Zabriski," "A Sea Turn," "Goliath."

The writings of N. P. Willis are interesting as showing the taste of the earlier part of the central period. From his poems, "Unseen Spirits," "Parrhasius," and "Hagar in the Wilderness" are typical, and his prose may be sampled in some of his descriptions of travel.

George William Curtis is seen to best advantage in the essays from the Easy Chair, e.g., "Honor," "The Mannerless Sex," and any others the topics of which are especially interesting to the reader. These may if desired be followed by some of the orations, or by some of the earlier descriptions of travel.

The most interesting of Beecher's addresses are probably those delivered in England during the war.

Melville's *Typee*, *Omoo*, and *Moby Dick* may be recommended to the boy who loves accounts of adventure.

The *Rise of Silas Lapham* is perhaps the best of Mr. Howells's novels to begin with, and this may be followed by *Their Wedding Journey*, *A Hazard of New Fortunes*, or *The Lady of the Aroostook*.

The farces may be represented by *The Elevator* or *The Sleeping-Car*. Some of the author's later short stories are collected in the volume *Between the Dark and the Daylight*. Howells's literary and miscellaneous essays may be seen in the volumes *Impressions and Experiences*, and *Literature and Life*, where the student may sample those whose subjects appeal to him.

The beginner will probably wish to confine himself to the earlier work of Mr. Henry James. Suggestions for study in the short stories might include *Daisy Miller*, *An International Episode*, *The Lesson of the Master*, *Sir Edmund Orme*; and for the novels, perhaps *The American*, *Portrait of a Lady*.

Representative poems by Alice Cary are: "Pictures of Memory," "Balder's Wife," "An Order for a Picture," "Sometimes"; by Phœbe Cary: "Nearer Home," "Suppose"; by Emma Lazarus: "On the Proposal to erect a Monument in England to Lord Byron," "Autumn Sadness," "The Banner of the Jew."

The standard life of BAYARD TAYLOR is that by Marie Hansen Taylor and H. E. Scudder. Representative poems are "On the Headland," "Autumnal Dreams," "Song" (Daughter of Egypt, veil thine eyes), "Bedouin Song," "Hassan to his Mare," "The Song of the Camp," "Proposal," "The Quaker Widow," "The Palm and the Pine." Taylor's prose is best seen in *Views Afoot*, or in other volumes of travel which may attract because of their subjects. The translation of *Faust* should not be forgotten.

Among the better short poems of Boker are "A Ballad of Sir John Franklin," "Dirge for a Soldier"; and students interested in the drama may possibly wish to read "Francisca da Rimini." Read may be known from "Sheridan's Ride."

*Suggestions for Papers and Topics.*—A study might be made of the New York newspapers and their relations to young authors (see Greeley's *Recollections*, etc. Make a list of as many as possible of the New York writers who held editorial positions, and trace the journalistic careers of some of them); and a paper, perhaps more interesting than profitable, might be compiled on the reminiscences of the famous Pfaff's restaurant (see Stoddard, *Recollections*, *Winter*, *Old Friends*, etc.).

Suggested topics on Whitman: Whitman's hospital experiences as told in *Specimen Days*, *The Wound-Dresser*, etc.; Whitman's treatment of the sea in his poems; What seems "unpoetic" in

Whitman's work? A selection of quotable expressions from *Leaves of Grass*; Whitman's tributes to Lincoln in prose and verse.

Suggested topics on Stedman, Stoddard, Aldrich: The literary friendship of Stedman, Stoddard, Aldrich, and Taylor (see the biographies of each); The subjects of Stedman's and Stoddard's poems compared with those of the New England poets; Choose the ten most musical poems of each of the three authors; *The Story of a Bad Boy* compared with other semi-autobiographic books (e.g., *Tom Sawyer*, Howells's *A Boy's Town*, Warner's *Being a Boy*).

Suggested topics on lesser New York authors: O'Brien's stories compared with Poe's; Willis's paraphrases of scripture stories; Curtis as a social preacher; The "Easy-Chair" essays (subjects treated, comparison with other informal essays); How Beecher handled a hostile audience (a study of the Liverpool and Manchester addresses); A comparison of one of Melville's stories with *Two Years before the Mast*.

Suggested topics on Mr. Howells and Mr. James: The Character of Silas Lapham; Mr. Howells's portrayal of some women characters; How Mr. Howells makes his characters seem real; A comparison of Mr. James's realism with Mr. Howells's (characters, scenes, object in writing); The supernatural in some stories of Mr. James and Mr. Howells (compare with each other, or with some earlier writer).

Suggested topics on Pennsylvania writers: Striking experiences from *Views Afoot*; Old-fashioned books of travel (compare two or more works, e.g., one of Taylor's volumes, one of Willis's, *Outre-Mer*, Emerson's *English Traits*, Hawthorne's *Our Old Home*, one of Curtis's travel volumes, Howells's *Venetian Life*, etc.); or, *Views Afoot* compared with some recent books of travel. The ten most musical of Taylor's poems; Boker's "Francesca da Rimini" compared with Stephen Phillips's treatment of the same theme (rather difficult); "Sheridan's Ride" — the event and the poem.

#### THE SOUTH

*Suggestions for Reading.* — Useful works on Southern literature in general are: Moses, *The Literature of the South*, Holliday, *A History of Southern Literature*, Link, *Pioneers of Southern Literature*, Baskerville, *Southern Writers*, Pickett, *Literary Hearthstones of Dixie*, Hubner, *Representative Southern Poets*, Trent, *Southern*



*Writers; Selections in Prose and Verse, Painter, The Poets of Virginia, Wauchope, The Writers of South Carolina.*

The best life of POE is that by George E. Woodberry (two volumes, 1909; not to be confounded with an earlier one-volume life by the same author). Since there are so many untrue and even wild stories regarding Poe's life the student should be sure to depend on recent and reliable biographical sketches. The two best editions of Poe's works are those edited by Harrison and by Stedman & Woodberry. An idea of Poe's criticism may be gained from "The Poetic Principle," "The Philosophy of Composition," two reviews of Hawthorne's *Twice Told Tales*, and other reviews of the student's own choosing. The following list of poems is fairly representative: "To Science," "To Helen" (Helen, thy beauty is to me), "Israfel," "The Sleeper," "Lenore," "The Haunted Palace," "Dreamland," "The Raven," "Ulalume," "Annabel Lee," "The Bells." The tales are of so many different kinds and tastes differ so widely that it is hard to suggest a list for study, but a selection may be made from the following: "MS. found in a Bottle," "Morella," "The Unparalleled Adventures of one Hans Pfaall," "The Assigination," "Shadow," "The Fall of the House of Usher," "William Wilson," "The Man of the Crowd," "The Murders in the Rue Morgue," "The Masque of the Red Death," "The Pit and the Pendulum," "The Gold-Bug," "The Tell-Tale Heart," "The Purloined Letter," "The Imp of the Perverse," "The Cask of Amontillado," "Landor's Cottage."

There is a good life of SIMMS by W. D. Trent. *The Yemassee* is probably the best of Simms's novels with which to begin, and this may be followed by *The Partisan* and *Mellichampe*.

Representative poems by Timrod are: "Spring," "The Cotton Boll," "Carolina," "Charleston," "Ode"; by Hayne, "Aspect of the Pines," "A Dream of the South Winds," "In Harbor"; by P. P. Cooke, "Florence Vane"; by Abram J. Ryan, "The Conquered Banner," "The Sword of Lee." *Leather Stocking and Silk*, or *The Virginia Comedians* should be the first choice from J. E. Cooke's works.

The standard life of LANIER is that of Mims. Among representative poems of Lanier are "Sunrise," "The Marshes of Glynn," "Song of the Chattahoochee," "The Mocking Bird," "The Revenge of Hamish," "Corn," "The Symphony," "A Ballad of Trees

and the Master," "Evening Song," "Betrayal," "Night and Day." The beginner is likely to spend little time on Lanier's prose, but may if he wishes dip into the letters, and glance at the *Science of English Verse*, and some of the critical essays.

*Suggestions for Papers and Topics.* — Papers might be prepared on literary conditions in various cities of the South, especially Charleston (See Trent, *Life of Simms*, etc.); and on The Southern Literary Messenger (See Minor, *The Southern Literary Messenger*).

Suggested topics on Poe: Poe's theory of poetry and its exemplification in his own poems (See "The Poetic Principle," etc.); What devices does Poe use to make his poems musical? A study of the changes that Poe made in two or three of his poems (e.g., "To Helen," "The Sleeper," "Lenore"); Poe's attack on Longfellow (See Harrison's Virginia edition of Poe, XII, 41-106); Poe's theory of the short story and its exemplification in his own stories (See his reviews of Hawthorne's); Poe's choice of scenes and settings for his stories; The characters in Poe's stories (Why does he not tell us more about them?); Poe's use of the supernatural (Compare with Irving's and Hawthorne's); Poe's detective stories compared with those of his successors; Resemblances between "The Gold-Bug" and Stevenson's *Treasure Island*; Poe's humor.

Suggested topics on other Southern writers: Early life in the South as portrayed by Simms; One of Simms's novels compared with one of Cooper's; Simms's treatment of the Indians; Timrod's war poems compared with Whittier's or Lowell's; Timrod and Hayne — the story of their friendship, the men and their poems compared; The political and sectional poems of Timrod and Hayne compared with those of Northern writers, e.g., Whittier; Representative Southern songs of sentiment ("My life is like the summer rose," "Florence Vane," "I break the glass," and others to be found by the student); Father Ryan's songs of the South compared with those of antislavery writers at the North; J. E. Cooke as a writer of old-fashioned romance.

Suggested topics on Lanier: Lanier's theory of poetry illustrated from his own verse (difficult); Southern life as reflected in Lanier's poems; Lanier's treatment of Nature in the poems; Lanier's poems compared with those of Poe (How does each poet produce his peculiar effects?).

## THE WEST

*Suggestions for Reading.* — If any student is not already familiar with Lincoln's "Gettysburg Address," and "Second Inaugural Address," he should read these, and may follow them with parts of the debate with Douglas and other speeches.

Among the most representative novels of Edward Eggleston are *The Hoosier School-Master*, *The Circuit Rider*, and *Roxy*. The best work of Lew Wallace is *Ben-Hur*. John Hay's distinctive humor is seen in the *Pike County Ballads*, of which two of the best known are "Jim Bludso of the Prairie Belle," and "Little Breeches." Hay's serious poetry is less important; his early prose may be seen in *Castilian Days*, and his later and more serious work in the life of Lincoln. Selections such as may be found in Stedman & Hutchinson, *A Library of American Literature*, will be ample for "Josh Billings."

It is hard to suggest a brief list of readings that is fully representative of Mark Twain. If the student could read but one book perhaps the best would be *Huckleberry Finn*. This, *Tom Sawyer*, *Joan of Arc*, *The Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court*, and *Pudd'nhead Wilson* can be fairly judged only when read entire. Works like *Innocents Abroad*, *Roughing It*, and *Life on the Mississippi* can well be read by extracts.

There are lives of BRET HARTE by Pemberton, Merwin, and Boynton, none of them very satisfactory. Representative poems of Harte are "Jim," "Her Letter," "Grizzly," "Plain Talk from Truthful James," "The Society upon the Stanislaus," "Dickens in Camp." Among his best tales are "The Luck of Roaring Camp," "The Outcasts of Poker Flat," "Tennessee's Partner."

Representatives of Sill's poems are: "A Fool's Prayer," "Tempted"; of "Joaquin" Miller's, "Columbus," "Crossing the plains"; of Helen Hunt Jackson's, "Poppies in the Wheat," "Coronation." The most popular of Mrs. Jackson's prose works, and probably the best to read, is *Ramona*.

*Suggestions for Papers and Topics.* — Students especially interested might prepare papers on early magazines in Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois (See Venable, *Beginnings of Literary Culture in the Ohio Valley*); or on the early history of the *Overland Monthly*.

Suggested topics on lesser authors: The songs of Stephen C.

Foster; Lincoln as an orator (contrasted with Webster and others of the old school); Frontier life as portrayed in one of Eggleston's novels; Striking descriptive passages in *Ben-Hur*; Hay's dialect poems compared with Lowell's.

Suggested topics on Mark Twain: Mark Twain's humor compared with that of "Artemus Ward"; with that of Lowell and Holmes; The element of exaggeration in Mark Twain's humor; The element of irreverence in Mark Twain's humor; Striking descriptive passages from *Huckleberry Finn* and *Life on the Mississippi*; Mark Twain's patriotism as seen in his works; Mark Twain's view of slavery as seen in *Huckleberry Finn* and *Pudd'nhead Wilson*.

Suggested topics on writers of the Pacific coast: The moral teaching of Harte's tales; Harte's humor, as seen in his verse and prose; Harte's treatment of nature; Harte's pictures of Western life compared with those of Mark Twain in *Roughing It*, etc.; Resemblances between Harte and Dickens; Mrs. Jackson's view of the Indians compared with that of other American writers of fiction.

## CHAPTER V

### RECENT YEARS

1883-1914

**General Conditions.** — If a literary period is to be judged by its masterpieces and great names, the last thirty years in American literary history have been far less important than the fifty that went just before. Many of the writers who were discussed in the preceding chapter lived and worked far into this later period, and two or three are still living, but no man who had not made his reputation before 1883 is quite sure of a place with the greater authors of the last century. There have been, and are, many good writers, perhaps more than ever before. There have been, and are, many good magazines; and more American books are read abroad than at any preceding time; but there is a lack of men of such preëminence that they are sure of lasting fame. It is hardly necessary to point out that the same is to a great extent true in English literature of the same period. There are those who believe that this indicates a change in literary history; that the age of the few great writers has passed, and that of literary democracy has come. It seems more likely, however, that the English-speaking peoples have been experiencing one of the periods of uncertainty that is likely to follow a creative period. If this is so we may hope that in the fullness of time there will appear other great writers, greater, perhaps, than any that have gone before.

This chapter will be occupied chiefly with the discussion of general movements. An attempt will be made to estimate the value of a few writers whose work is finished; and a few living authors, though not necessarily the most important, will be mentioned to illustrate tendencies and kinds of writing. In general, however, specific criticisms of men and books will be avoided.<sup>1</sup>

It was said at the conclusion of the preceding chapter that shortly after the close of the Civil War the older sectionalism in letters passed away. With the development of the railroad, the telegraph, the telephone, and also of the public library, the reasons of convenience that drew authors into the greater cities have largely disappeared. While publishing interests are grouped, even more than formerly, in a few centers, authors are scattered over the entire country. It is possible for a writer to live in Georgia, or Indiana, or California, and still keep in touch with the thought of the time, and publish in New York or Boston almost as well as if he lived in one of these cities. One result of this scattered residence is that there are no longer "schools" or closely unified groups of authors. Another is that writers, especially writers of prose fiction, make more and better use than before of local scenes, characters, and dialects. This latter manifestation of sectionalism is, however, only on the surface. In spirit,

<sup>1</sup>The discussion in a formal history of the writings of contemporaries is always a difficult and a dangerous matter. Much of the literary criticism of the past is a warning that only after the lapse of a reasonable time can the relative value of an author's work be safely estimated. This does not mean that a reader should be afraid to form his own judgments, or to say what he thinks; but he should realize that he is likely to change his mind after a time. The discussion of recent writings under the guidance of the instructor may be made an interesting and a legitimate part of a course in American literature, but it should not be undertaken too seriously.

American literature has at last become as truly national, perhaps, as the literature of so great and complex a country can become. To this new literature representatives of all parts of the country are contributing. It is especially notable that the South, which has never before produced literature in proportion to the culture and intellect of its people, has done its full share in recent years.

One important fact in the literary development of the last generation has been the growth in number and importance of magazines. The invention of new processes of illustration and the development of a system by which periodicals receive great returns from advertising have led to the creation of magazines such as would have been impossible fifty years ago. These are important, on the one hand, because they are able to command the productions of the best writers, and, on the other, because they form a great part of the reading of the general public. With this development, which is on the whole for the better, has come some loss. The older type of literary magazine, which like the *Atlantic* fifty years ago appealed to a somewhat select class of readers, hardly exists to-day. Even the better periodicals suffer somewhat from their attempts to be popular, and have less literary distinction than formerly. Since the very best writers contribute largely to the magazines, it follows that almost all literary writing has experienced a similar change. Here, as elsewhere, the tendency is toward the greater democracy of letters. More persons than ever before are able to appreciate good literature, but on the other hand writers are asking more than ever before what will appeal to popular taste. Whether this writing for the average man does not temporarily lower the artistic standard may well be questioned; but no one who has faith in mankind will become pessimistic over the future of literature.

**Writers of the Short Story.** — Owing partly, perhaps, to national taste, and partly to practical considerations connected with magazine publication, the form of literature which has seemed of most importance in the last few years has been prose fiction, and particularly the short story. It has been seen that Poe was the first critic to give the short story high rank as an independent literary form; and since his day Americans have done much toward its development. Some later critics have proposed a hyphenated word, "short-story," to denote works which conform to their theories of technique — theories many of which are based on or developed from those of Poe. The fact that the short story is so compact a whole, to be read in a short time, and to be judged by its total impression, has been an incentive to revision and careful workmanship. The possibility of producing a finished piece of prose fiction within the compass of a few thousand words has led many persons to try their hands at authorship. While the result has been a great mass of mediocre work, it is likely that some have discovered their own abilities who would never have been able to carry through the labor of writing a novel.

There have been hundreds of short-story writers whose merits have been sufficient to enable them to appear in the better magazines, and it is hard to choose a brief list for mention. Those named are not necessarily the most excellent, and indeed, since there are so many kinds of short stories, relative excellence is hard to determine. Several writers already discussed, among them Bret Harte, Thomas Bailey Aldrich, Mr. William Dean Howells, and Mr. Henry James, continued to write short stories after 1883. Another writer of finished short tales was HENRY CUYLER BUNNER, a New York man, for nearly twenty years editor of *Puck*. Many of the best examples of his work were collected into the



volumes *Zadoc Pine and other Stories*, *Love in old Cloathes and other Stories*, and *Short Sixes*. There is a fineness and delicacy about his stories, as about his verse and miscellaneous writings, and he frequently shows the perception of humor which made him the successful editor of a comic paper, though he was by no means a newspaper humorist. FRANCIS (FRANK) R. STOCKTON,

an original and whimsical genius, was also connected with New York periodicals. He wrote much — too much and too hastily for his fame — and he tried both short stories and novels. The best of the former, "The Lady; or the Tiger?" is the most perfect of American hoax stories, and is interesting as a hoax which will stand rereading. Some of his other tales, such as "Negative Gravity"



Frank R. Stockton.

and "The Transferred Ghost," show his originality in thinking out absurd situations and presenting them so that they will seem at least half real. Of his longer stories the "Rudder Grange" group has some of the same qualities. Stockton, too, had his humor, less winningly genial than Bunner's, but of a fascinating and ingenious sort.

A large number of writers have produced "local color" stories — that is, stories in which much attention is given to the portrayal of scenes and characters peculiar to a par-

ticular section of the country. SARAH ORNE JEWETT pictured both in short stories and in novels conditions in rural Maine, where she passed her life. She had more sympathy with the persons she represented than many authors of local color stories, and while her work is less amusing than that of an external observer might be, it is more genuine. JOEL CHANDLER HARRIS, of Georgia, created a local color character in Uncle Remus,



Joel Chandler Harris.

an old-time darkey, but the tales which Uncle Remus tells are not based on the author's observation, but on the folklore of the negro race. Harris wrote far too fast and too much, but his early Uncle Remus stories are a unique and lasting creation. The most popular is probably "The Wonderful Tar-Baby Story."

A great number of writers of local color stories are still living. MRS. MARY E. WILKINS FREEMAN made her reputation by her portrayal of humble, provincial New England life; and though she has since attempted other kinds of work, it is probable that she is at her best in such tales as "A New England Nun," and "The Revolt of Mother." PROFESSOR BRANDER MATTHEWS of Columbia University has written some finished sketches, the nature of which is indicated by the title of one volume, *Vignettes of Manhattan*. MR. RICHARD HARDING DAVIS is the

author of a variety of stories, but many of those which won him his early reputation picture scenes in New York City. MR. HAMLIN GARLAND has represented graphically the monotonous and unlovely life of the farmers of the Middle West. The South has been especially favored by local color writers. MR. THOMAS NELSON PAGE has pictured the old-time Virginian and the old-time negro in charmingly sentimental and romantic tales. MR. F. HOPKINSON SMITH has written with more humor and dramatic force of certain types of Southern character. MR. GEORGE W. CABLE found his literary material among the New Orleans creoles. MISS MARY N. MURFREE, who writes as "Charles Egbert Craddock," and MR. JAMES LANE ALLEN have presented different aspects of the life in Tennessee and Kentucky. MR. OWEN WISTER, though he lives in the East, has used literary material from the West and Southwest. Indeed, nearly every section of the country where life is distinctive or peculiar has been portrayed in fiction. The writings of KATE DOUGLAS WIGGIN (Mrs. George C. Riggs) abound in local color, though the author does not confine herself to any one sort of scene. Several of her early tales, like *The Birds' Christmas Carol* and *Timothy's Quest* are sympathetic and slightly sentimental stories of child life. The scenes of some of her later writings are laid in England.

**Writers of Novels.** — While the short story has been the favorite form for the tired and hurried reader, and has received much attention from the critics, the novel has continued to hold its own. Many of the story writers named in the preceding paragraphs have written novels; several other authors, while they may have attempted short stories, are primarily novelists. In New York PAUL LEICESTER FORD wrote some clever novels which show careful labor but are somewhat lacking in literary finish. His best book is

*The Honorable Peter Sterling*, which while not historical fiction suggests the life of Grover Cleveland. *Janice Meredith* is a sentimental historical novel of the Revolutionary time. A far more finished story-teller was FRANCIS MARION CRAWFORD, who though descended from old American families was born and spent most of his life in Italy. Crawford intended that his novels should be read for the pure pleasure



F. Marion Crawford.

of the story; but though he would be classed as a romanticist he was a romanticist who observed closely, who painted his backgrounds true to life, and whose characters always act from reasonable motives. He has left a long list of clever, fascinating stories, among the best of which are *A Cigarette-Maker's Romance*, and a trilogy with the scene laid in Rome — *Saracinesca*, *Sant' Ilario*, and *Don*

*Orsino*. EDWARD NOYES WESTCOTT, of New York State, left one clever and carefully executed study of character, *David Harum*. FRANK NORRIS, in *The Octopus* and *The Pit*, showed the tendency to treat economic evils in novels. In studying these recent developments and experiments in fiction one must not forget that much of the work of Mr. Howells and Mr. James has been done since 1883.

During the last two or three decades there has appeared a large number of novels each of which has taken a place in

the list of the "ten best sellers," and then been pushed aside by later favorites. About the close of the century many of these were historical fiction; of late many of them are studies of social and economic problems; and there are always some not readily classified. Most of them show a tendency toward realism, though there have been a few notable exceptions. All of these novels have some literary merit, and possibly the verdict of time may give some of them a sure place on the library shelves, but as yet this is in no instance certain.

To mention any of the living novelists is to invite indignant protest because others are omitted. Among those who combine literary finish and creative imagination with the qualities that make for popularity is MR. WINSTON CHURCHILL. Mr. Churchill's novels *Richard Carvel*, *The Crossing*, and *The Crisis* are historical, and some of his more recent work shows a tendency to discuss present-day problems. *To Have and To Hold*, by MISS MARY JOHNSTON, is another of the historical novels which was widely read when it first appeared. MRS. MARGARET WADE DELAND might have been listed with the writers of short stories, but it was by her novel *John Ward, Preacher* that she first became known. MRS. EDITH WHARTON is the author of earnest and finished novels, the best to date probably being *The House of Mirth*. In *The Common Lot* and other novels PROFESSOR ROBERT HERRICK of the University of Chicago studies men and women as they are affected by the artificiality and complexity of modern life.

**Writers of Verse.**—There has been no "school" of American poets during the last thirty years, and the sporadic verse of various authors has been somewhat hesitating and uncertain. The tendency has been to produce brief rather than long poems. Probably the American poets of the earlier time who have most influenced their followers are Em-

erson and Whitman, though the manner of the latter has not often been really imitated. In contrast, however, to the freedom for which these poets stand have been various attempts at the finished and conventional forms known as "society verse." The light and charming poems of Henry Cuyler Bunner, already mentioned, are of this class.

RICHARD HOVEY, a native of Illinois and at the time of his early death a professor in Barnard College, New York, wrote some ambitious poems, chief of which is *Lancelot and Guenevere*, "a poem in dramas," in four parts. This shows immaturity, but it also shows energy and poetic enthusiasm, and no small skill in verse, and when it was published seemed a promise of better things to come. Some of Hovey's lyrics, a number of which were published jointly with his friend MR. BLISS CARMEN in *Songs from Vagabondia*, and his political "Unmanifest Destiny" are among the best short poems of the last decade of the last century. Another poet who died too soon to fulfill his promise was WILLIAM VAUGHN MOODY, a Harvard graduate, and for some years a member of the faculty of the University of Chicago. His poems, the best of which is the "Ode in Time of Hesitation," have both power and melody, and occasionally he rises to heights rarely attained in recent years. During the latter part of his brief career he turned to dramatic writing, and produced two successful stage plays, *The Great Divide* and *The Faith Healer*. PAUL L. DUNBAR, a negro writer living in Ohio, also died at the early age of thirty-four. His power was far less than that of Hovey and Moody, as his opportunities were less, but his poems show talent and attracted much attention because of the general interest in the intellectual development of the negro race.

EMILY DICKINSON, who really wrote in the earlier period, but whose poems were not published until after her death

in 1886, lived a retired life at Amherst, Massachusetts. Her poems are all short, and are notable for their terseness and pointedness of expression. Most of them are comments on life and on her own emotional experiences. RICHARD WATSON GILDER, long an editor of the *Century Magazine*, was the author of many finished poems, a few of which show his interest in social reforms. FATHER JOHN B. TABB, of Maryland, wrote many sonnets and brief poems with fine emotional quality and great perfection of form.

Few of the living writers of verse can be discussed here. No doubt the most widely read is MR. JAMES WHITCOMB RILEY, of Indiana. Mr. Riley's sentimental and moralizing poems of everyday life have some of the weaker qualities that helped to make Longfellow's work popular, but they show a lack of calm dignity and a striving after effect of which the older poet was never guilty. The REVEREND HENRY VAN DYKE, formerly pastor of a New York City church and later professor in Princeton University, writes smooth verse, much of it expressing his appreciation of nature. MISS EDITH THOMAS, of Ohio, has written many restrained short poems. MR. MADISON J. CAWEIN, of Louisville, Kentucky, is the author of a great quantity of verse, the best part of which is lyrics descriptive of nature and of Southern scenes. The sensitive and restrained poems of PROFESSOR GEORGE E. WOODBERRY appeal to a limited group of readers, but many critics place him in the first rank of living American poets.

**Writers of Prose Essays.** — The growth of magazines has led to the development of a great number of prose essayists who write clearly and entertainingly. The last few years have evolved a new form of magazine writing in which political, economic, and social questions are expounded with a graphic clearness, and solutions are presented with a plausibil-

ity heretofore rare in such discussion. Many of the writers of such articles received their original training as newspaper men, and their devices of style and arrangement are evolved and refined from the practices of the journalist. In statement of fact they are likely, while always adhering to literal truth, to sacrifice accuracy to picturesqueness,<sup>1</sup> and in style they regard attractiveness and the appearance of frankness before all other qualities. Whether this type of essay will develop into a new literary form remains to be seen; but those who have so far written it are likely to pay for their immediate popularity by being forgotten in the near future. Besides these essayists there have been many others who appeal to the general public in various ways, and still others who have addressed themselves to a more restricted class of readers.

EUGENE FIELD can best be considered among the essayists, though he wrote both fiction and verse. A native of St. Louis, he was all his life connected with Western newspapers, and his last and best work was done in Chicago. Here he edited in the *Daily News*, afterwards the *Record*, a column in which he discussed not only men and events of the day, but books and literature, ancient and modern. His point of view and his manner of presentation were individual, but he had genuine appreciation for some of the good and especially for some of the curious things in literature, and he

<sup>1</sup> It was this fact that caused the term "muck-rakers" to be applied to some writers of this class. These men knew from their journalistic experience that readers in general are more likely to be impressed by the bad than by the good in an institution, particularly if the institution is an unpopular one. Therefore, while they always stated things so that they could not be accused of deliberate untruth, and while they always affected perfect fairness, they skillfully gave the impression that things were worse than they are. On the other hand, those who favor some particular remedy for social ills always succeed in creating the belief that conditions are ideal where their pet reforms have been adopted.



succeeded in bringing these to the attention of the man in the street as no professional critic could have done. One of his favorite authors was Horace, and he published a series of translations which seem a trifle flippant to the classical scholar, but which remind one as school editions do not that the old Roman was a very live and a very natural sort of man. Field's prose tales, light poems, and songs for and about children have been very popular; but he is perhaps most significant for his attempts to find in classic literature something that would appeal to the average reader, and to present this through the medium of a daily paper.

LAFCADIO HEARN was an international figure, who hardly belongs to any one land, but who had most associations with America. He was born in Greece, the son of an Irish army officer

and a Greek mother; was educated in part in Paris, lived for twenty years in America, and for the last fourteen years of his life in Japan. In America he was connected with newspapers in Cincinnati, New Orleans, and New York, and he wrote tales and sketches which are characterized by remarkably luxurious and moving passages of description. After he went to Japan he wrote on the life, art, and philos-



Eugene Field.

ophy of the Japanese, who credit him with having understood their civilization better than any other Westerner has done. His later essays, while somewhat more restrained than the early work, show the same richness and emotional quality of style.

Among living essayists are MR. SAMUEL McCORD CROTHERS, of Cambridge, Massachusetts, whose informal manner sometimes remotely suggests that of Charles Lamb; and MISS AGNES REPPLIER, of Philadelphia, who discusses varied topics in a way that is always individual and entertaining. The list of those who deal especially with literary matters includes PROFESSOR GEORGE E. WOODBERRY, and PROFESSOR BRANDER MATTHEWS, both of whom have been mentioned for their creative work, and MR. PAUL ELMER MORE, for some time editor of the *New York Nation*. More popular in method are MR. HAMILTON W. MABIE and the REVEREND HENRY VAN DYKE, the latter already mentioned as a writer of verse. One form of essay which has had much vogue is that which presents the results of sympathetic observation of nature. The most notable recent writer of this sort of prose is MR. JOHN BURROUGHS.

**Humorists.** — The West has continued to produce popular humorists, few if any of whom are sure of enduring reputations. MR. GEORGE ADE, who has occasionally shown keen insight into life and graphic descriptive power in the midst of much cheap and superficial work, and MR. PETER DUNNE, whose "Mr. Dooley" papers rank as our best recent political satire, both began their careers as Chicago newspaper men.

#### CONCLUSION

It has been the purpose of the preceding study to trace the development of literary writing in America, viewing it so

far as possible as the expression of American life. The student has seen the beginnings made by the first English immigrants, and has noticed how from the first writings in the separate colonies developed groups or schools which retained some of their peculiarities until comparatively recent years. He has seen how each of these groups was influenced by the national idea, first during the Revolutionary period, then during the first few generations of constitutional government; and how, after the fierce struggle of the Civil War, provincial differences disappeared and American literature became national, reflecting the life and feelings of all sections of the country, but without sectionalism. He has seen how the older ideals of American life culminated, so far as literary expression was concerned, in the distinguished group of writers who flourished in the middle of the nineteenth century; and he has observed that at the present time literature, though varied and interesting in its manifestations, is represented by no very distinguished names. Predictions as to the future are impossible; but the student of this book may be reasonably sure that within his normal lifetime will come new achievements, and developments perhaps even yet undreamed of. These, whatever they are, will have their roots in the past, and will express the national life of the future. It should be the part of the intelligent American to be on the alert for new writers and new tendencies, to welcome eagerly the good as it appears, yet to guard against the sudden enthusiasm which often bestows on the latest fad praise that soon seems ridiculous. It is to be hoped that the preceding survey may help, not only to a better understanding of the masters who have already written but to an appreciation of the value and significance of any who may follow.

## READINGS AND TOPICS

*General Suggestions.* — The student should remember that he reads many of the writings of this time, not because of their great literary merit, but because they express the spirit and the tendencies of the day. He should also remember that the authors referred to in the lists which follow are not necessarily the most important, and that the works suggested for reading are not necessarily the best productions of their respective authors.

The best source for concise biographical information regarding living writers is the latest edition of *Who's Who in America*. See also, Vedder, *American Writers of To-Day*, Cooper, *Some American Story-Tellers*, Rittenhouse, *Younger American Poets*, Sladen, *Younger American Poets*, and consult the *Readers' Guide to Periodical Literature* for references to articles in the periodicals.

*Suggestions for Reading.* — The student who is not already familiar with the *Atlantic Monthly*, *Harper's Magazine*, *The Century Magazine*, *Scribner's Magazine*, and some of the better magazines sold at lower prices should learn so far as he can by inspection the chief characteristics of each.

Representative short stories by Bunner are to be found in the volumes *Short Sizes*, *Love in Old Cloathes*. From Stockton, read "The Lady ; or the Tiger?" Other clever and distinctive short stories of Stockton are "The Transferred Ghost," "A Tale of Negative Gravity." *Rudder Grange* is representative of his longer stories. Good stories by Miss Jewett are to be found in the volumes *A White Heron and other Stories*, *Tales of New England*, e.g., "A White Heron," "The Dulham Ladies." See also, *The Country of the Pointed Firs*. Among the most popular of Kate Douglas Wiggin's stories are *The Birds' Christmas Carol*, *Timothy's Quest*, *A Cathedral Courtship*, *Penelope's Progress*. Richard Harding Davis's stories are well represented in the volumes *Gallegher and Other Stories*, *Van Bibber and Others*. Among those that might be suggested for reading are "Gallegher," "Her First Appearance," "The Bar Sinister." Any of the earlier Uncle Remus sketches are good. "The Wonderful Tar-Baby Story" is perhaps the favorite. Representatives of Mary E. Wilkins Freeman's distinctive work may be found in *A New England Nun and Other Stories*, *The Wind in the Rose-Bush and Other Stories of the Supernatural*. Suggested

titles are: "A New England Nun," "The Revolt of Mother," "The Wind in the Rose-Bush," "The South-West Chamber." The student can make his own selection from Matthews's *Vignettes of Manhattan*. Page may be judged by "Mars Chan," and "Meh Lady," and other tales in the volume *In Ole Virginia*, and from *Red Rock*. From Cable's sketches in *Old Creole Days* may be chosen "Posson Jone," "Jean-ah Poquin." Of Cable's novels *The Grandissimes* has been best received. For the work of Mary N. Murfree see the volume, *In the Tennessee Mountains*; and for James Lane Allen, *The Blue Grass Region and other sketches of Kentucky, Flute and Violin*, and for a sample of his longer fiction, *The Kentucky Cardinal*. Representative of Owen Wister are "Philosophy Four," and, as a longer work, *The Virginian*. Much of Hamlin Garland's best work may be judged from the tales in *Main Travelled Roads*, e.g., "Up the Coolly," "Among the Corn-Rows," "The Return of a Private."

Among the better romances of Crawford are *Saracinesca*, *Sant' Ilario*, *Don Orsino*, *A Cigarette-Maker's Romance*.

The study of lesser living novelists and their work should not form an important part of a course in American literature, but the following partial list of works that have attracted attention in recent years may be useful for reference: F. Hopkinson Smith, *Col. Carter of Cartersville*; Winston Churchill, *Richard Carvel*, *The Crossing*, *The Crisis*; Edith Wharton, *The House of Mirth*; Mrs. Margaret Deland, *John Ward*, *Preacher*, *Old Chester Tales* (short stories); Mary Johnston, *To Have and to Hold*; Frank Norris, *The Pit*, *The Octopus*.

Much of Bunner's most successful verse may be found in the collection *Airs from Arcady*, e.g., "The Way to Arcady," "Da Capo," "One, Two, Three," "An Old Song." Representative poems of Richard Hovey are "Unmanifest Destiny," "Love in the Winds," "The Wander-Lovers." From Moody the student should read "Ode in Time of Hesitation," "On a Soldier Fallen in the Philippines," "Gloucester Moors"; from Emily Dickinson, "Parting," "Autumn," "Fringed Gentian," "Chartless," "Heart, we will forget him," "The Railway Train," "Vanished." Field's work may be represented by "Little Boy Blue," "Dutch Lullaby," "The Hush-a-bye Lady," "The Singing in God's Acre," "The Truth about Horace," "Dibdin's Ghost," "Just 'fore Christmas"; and his prose

fiction may be seen in *A Little Book of Profitable Tales*. A few of Gilder's better brief pieces are "Ode," "The Sonnet," "The Heroic Age."

Among the verses of James Whitcomb Riley that have had greatest popular vogue are "A Life Lesson," "Away," "Knee Deep in June," "Nothin' to Say," "An Old Sweetheart of Mine," "Little Orphant Annie," "When the Frost is on the Punkin'," "The Old Man and Jim," "The Raggedy Man," "Old Aunt Mary's," "Kissing the Rod," "Our Kind of a Man." Selections from the Reverend Henry Van Dyke's poems may be found in *The Van Dyke Book*. The poems of Madison J. Cawein may be judged from a selected volume compiled by the author with an introduction by W. D. Howells.

Lafcadio Hearn's early manner may be judged from his tale *Chita*, a *Memory of Lost Island*, and his later work from selections from *Glimpses of Unfamiliar Japan*, or others of the volumes written after his removal to the Far East.

The student should make his own choice from the writings of the essayists, taking into consideration the subjects treated and the kind of essay he enjoys. Professor Matthews has published several volumes of essays, but can perhaps be seen to best advantage in *The American of the Future and Other Essays*, *Gateways to Literature and Other Essays*. Some of Professor Van Dyke's essays are collected in the volume, *Essays in Application*. Some of Mabie's many critical essays may be found in *My Study Fire*, *Essays in Literary Interpretation*. Miss Agnes Repplier has published *Books and Men*, *Points of View*, *Essays in Idleness*. Burroughs's comments on nature and on literature may be found in such volumes as *Wake Robin*, *Indoor Studies*, *Birds and Poets*. S. M. Crothers is at his best in *The Gentle Reader*. Paul Elmer More is the author of the *Shelburne Essays*. Robert Grant writes informally in *Reflections of a Married Man*, *The Art of Living*; and employs somewhat of the same vein in his novel *The Chippendales*.

*Suggestions for Papers and Topics*. — The most valuable topics on the recent times, those which discuss general movements and tendencies, are likely to call for more reading and consideration than the student can give. Comparisons may be made between recent writers and their predecessors in the same fields, but these will suggest themselves so readily that they need not be pointed

out here. A comparison between two or more of the better magazines as regards relative proportions of articles of different kinds, etc., would be valuable (should be based on not less than one full year of each).

Suggested topics on writers of fiction: Bunner's humor; Stockton's use of the hoax (Compare "The Lady; or the Tiger?" with "Marjorie Daw"); Local color stories of New England, of New York, of the different regions of the South and the West; The use of dialect in local color short stories; The treatment of the supernatural by recent writers.

Suggested topics on writers of verse: Striking recent poems and the earlier poems they suggest; The popular element in Field's and Riley's work; Recent poems of patriotism.





APPENDIX  
CHRONOLOGICAL TABLES

AMERICAN LITERATURE	ENGLISH LITERATURE	BIOGRAPHICAL AND HISTORICAL EVENTS
	<b>1600-1625</b>	
1608. John Smith: True Relation.	1608. Shakespeare: King Lear.	1603. Elizabeth died; James I King.
	1609. Shakespeare: Sonnets; Troilus and Cressida; Pericles.	1607. Jamestown founded.
1610. Strachey: Wrack and Redemption of Sir Thomas Gates.	1610. Jonson: The Alchemist. Shakespeare: Macbeth.	1608. Milton born.
	1611. King James's Version of the Bible.	
	1613. Shakespeare: Henry VIII.	1616. Shakespeare died.

AMERICAN LITERATURE	ENGLISH LITERATURE	BIOGRAPHICAL AND HISTORICAL EVENTS
	<b>1600-1625</b>	1618. Sir Walter Raleigh died. 1620. Founding of Plymouth.
	<b>1625-1650</b>	1625. Charles I King. 1626. Bacon died.
1626. Sandys: Translation of Ovid. 1630. Bradford, Winthrop, both began their histories.	1621. Burton: Anatomy of Melancholy. 1625. Bacon: Essays (final form).	1630. Founding of Massachusetts Bay. 1631. John Smith died. Dryden born. 1633. Laud became Primate.
1637. Morton: New English Canaan.	1634. Milton: Comus. 1637. Milton: Lycidas.	1636. Harvard College founded. 1637. Jonson died. 1639. First printing-press in Massachusetts.

<p>1640. The Bay Psalm Book. 1644. Williams: The Bloody Tenent. 1647. Ward: The Simple Cobler.</p>		<p>1642. English Civil War began. 1649. Charles I executed.</p>
<p>—1650-1675—</p>		
<p>1650. Anne Bradstreet: Tenth Muse. 1654. Johnson: Wonder-working Providence.</p>	<p>1653. Walton: Compleat Angler. 1660. Pepys' Diary begun.</p>	<p>1658. Cromwell died. 1660. The Restoration; Charles II.</p>
<p>1662. Wigglesworth: Day of Doom. 1673. Sewall's Diary begun.</p>	<p>1663. Butler: Hudibras (Part I). 1667. Milton: Paradise Lost.</p>	<p>1663. Cotton Mather born. 1667. Swift born. 1674. Milton died. William Byrd born.</p>
<p>—1675-1700—</p>		
		<p>1675. King Philip's War.</p>

AMERICAN LITERATURE	ENGLISH LITERATURE	BIOGRAPHICAL AND HISTORICAL EVENTS
	<b>1676-1700</b>	
1677. Folger: Looking-Glass for the Times.	1678. Bunyan: Pilgrim's Progress (Part I).	1676. Bacon's Rebellion.
1678. Anne Bradstreet: Poems.	Dryden: All for Love.	1682. Philadelphia founded by Penn.
1682. Mary Rowlandson: Narrative of Captivity.		1685. James II King.
1684. Increase Mather: Essay for the Recording of Illustrious Providences.		1688. English Revolution.
		1692. Salem Witchcraft.
1693. Cotton Mather: Wonders of the Invisible World.	1697. Dryden: Alexander's Feast.	
	<b>1700-1725</b>	
1700. Sewall: Selling of Joseph.		1700. Dryden died. Yale College founded.

1702. Cotton Mather: Magnalia Christi Americana.	1702. Defoe: Shortest Way with Dissenters.	1702. Anne Queen.
1704. Sarah Kemble Knight: Journal.	1704. Swift: Battle of the Books; Tale of a Tub.	1703. Jonathan Edwards born. 1704. Boston News-Letter established. 1705. Wigglesworth died.
1705. Beverley: History of Virginia.		1706. Franklin born.
1707. Williams: Redeemed Captive.		
1708. Cook: Sot-Weed Factor.	1709. Pope: Pastorals. Addison and others: Tatler.	1709. S. Johnson born.
1710. Cotton Mather: Bonifacius (Essays to do Good).	1711. Pope: Essay on Criticism. Addison and others: Spectator.	
	1712. Pope: Rape of the Lock.	
	1719. Defoe: Robinson Crusoe (Part I).	1714. George I King. 1719. Addison died.
1722. Franklin: Dogood Papers.	1722. Defoe: Journal of the Plague Year.	

AMERICAN LITERATURE	ENGLISH LITERATURE	BIOGRAPHICAL AND HISTORICAL EVENTS
	1700-1725	1723. Increase Mather died.
	1725-1750	
1725. Franklin: Dissertation on Liberty and Necessity.	1726. Swift: Gulliver's Travels.	1727. George II King.
1727. Blair: Present State of Virginia.	1728. Pope: Dunciad.	1728. Cotton Mather died.
Colden: History of the Five Indian Nations.		1732. Washington born.
1729. Byrd: History of the Dividing Line.		
Sewall: Diary finished.		
1732. Secomb: Father Abbey's Will.		
1733. Franklin: Poor Richard's Almanac.		
1736. Prince: History of New England.		

<p>1738. Byles: Poem on the Death of the Queen.</p> <p>1741. Edwards: Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God.</p> <p>1744. Byles: Poems.</p> <p>1747. Livingston: Philosophic Solitude.</p>	<p>1740. Richardson: Pamela.</p> <p>1742. Fielding: Joseph Andrews.</p>	<p>1738. Whitefield in America.</p> <p>1744. Byrd died.</p> <p>1745. Pope died.</p> <p>1746. Swift died.</p> <p>1746. Princeton College founded.</p>
<p>1748. Richardson: Clarissa Harlowe.</p> <p>Smollett: Roderick Random.</p> <p>Thomson: Castle of Indolence.</p> <p>1749. Fielding: Tom Jones.</p>	<p>1750. Johnson: The Rambler.</p>	<p>1749. University of Pennsylvania founded.</p>
<p>1750. Franklin: Results of electrical experiments published.</p>		<p>1750-1776</p>

AMERICAN LITERATURE	ENGLISH LITERATURE	BIOGRAPHICAL AND HISTORICAL EVENTS
	<b>1750-1775</b>	
1754. Edwards: Treatise on the Freedom of the Will.	1751. Gray: Elegy.	1754. King's (Columbia) College founded.
1758. Franklin: Father Abraham's Speech.	1755. Johnson: Dictionary.	1755. Braddock defeated.
1758. Franklin: Prince of Parthia.	1756. Burke: The Sublime and the Beautiful.	1758. Jonathan Edwards died.
1764. Otis: Rights of British Colonies.	1762. McPherson: Poems of Ossian.	1760. George III King.
1767. Dickinson: Letters of a Farmer.	1764. Walpole: Castle of Otranto.	1764. Brown University founded.
	1766. Goldsmith: Vicar of Wakefield.	1765. Stamp Act.
		1770. Wordsworth born.



1771. Franklin : Autobiography (first part) written.	1771. Smollett : Humphrey Clinker.
1772. Trumbull : Progress of Dulness.	
1773. Phillis Wheatley : Poems.	1773. Goldsmith : She Stoops to Conquer.
1774. Political pamphlets by John Adams, Jefferson, Hamilton, and others. Hopkinson: <i>A Pretty Story</i> .	1773. Boston Tea Party. 1774. First Continental Congress.
1775-1800	
1775. Freneau : General Gage's Confession. Trumbull : McFingal (Canto I). Mercy Warren : The Group.	1775. Burke : Speech on Conciliation. Sheridan : The Rivals.
1776. Paine : Common Sense; The Crisis (begun).	1775. Battles of Lexington, Bunker Hill.
1778. Barlow : Prospect of Peace.	
1779. Hopkinson : Battle of the Kegs.	1776. Declaration of Independence.
1781. Freneau : British Prison-Ship.	1781. Cornwallis surrendered.

AMERICAN LITERATURE	ENGLISH LITERATURE	BIOGRAPHICAL AND HISTORICAL EVENTS
1782. Crevecoeur: Letters from an American Farmer.	1775-1800	1783. Irving born.
1785. Dwight: Conquest of Canaan.		1787. Constitutional Convention.
1786. Hartford Wits: Anarchiad. Tyler: The Contrast.	1786. Burns: Poems.	1788. Constitution ratified.
1787. Barlow: Vision of Columbus. Jefferson: Notes on Virginia.		1789. Washington President. 1790. Franklin died.
1788. Freneau: Miscellaneous Works. The Federalist.		
1789. Dunlap: The Father. 1790. Mrs. Warren: Poems. Mrs. Rowson: Charlotte Temple.		
1791. Paine: Rights of Man.	1791. Boswell: Life of Johnson.	

<p>1792. Barlow: Conspiracy of Kings. Brackenridge: Modern Chivalry.</p> <p>1794. Dwight: Greenfield Hill. Paine: Age of Reason.</p> <p>1796. Barlow: Hasty Pudding.</p> <p>1798. Brown: Wieland. Dunlap: André. Hopkinson: Hail Columbia.</p> <p>1799. Hartford Wits: Political Greenhouse. Brown: Ormond. Carey: Porcupiniad.</p>	<p>1792. French Republic.</p> <p>1793. Burns: Poems.</p> <p>1796. Coleridge: Poems.</p> <p>1798. Wordsworth and Coleridge: Lyrical Ballads.</p> <p>1797. John Adams President.</p> <p>1799. Washington died. Napoleon First Consul.</p>
<p>1800-1810</p>	
<p>1801. Brown: Edgar Huntley; Clara Howard; Jane Talbot.</p> <p>1803. Fessenden: Terrible Trac-toration. Wirt: Letters of a British Spy.</p>	<p>1801. Jefferson President.</p> <p>1803. Emerson born.</p>

AMERICAN LITERATURE	ENGLISH LITERATURE	BIOGRAPHICAL AND HISTORICAL EVENTS
	1800-1810	
1805. Mrs. Warren: History of the Revolution.	1805. Scott: Lay of the Last Minstrel.	1804. Hawthorne born.
1806. Webster: Dictionary.	1806. Coleridge: Christabel.	
1807. Barlow: Columbiad. Hartford Wits: Echo. Irving and others: Salmagundi.	1807. Byron: Hours of Idleness.	1807. Longfellow, Whittier, born. The Embargo.
1809. Irving: Knickerbocker's New York.	1808. Scott: Marmion.	1809. Holmes, Poe, Lincoln, born. Madison President.
	1810-1820	
1810. Ingersoll: Iniquity Letters.	1810. Scott: Lady of the Lake.	
	1812. Byron: Childe Harold. Austen: Pride and Prejudice.	1812. War with England. Browning, Dickens, born.
1814. Key: Star-Spangled Banner.	1814. Scott: Waverley.	1814. Peace with England.

1815. Freneau : Poems on American Affairs.	1815. Scott : Guy Mannering. Byron : Hebrew Melodies. Wordsworth : Poems.	1817. Monroe President.
1817. Bryant : Thanatopsis (published).	1816. Coleridge : Christabel. 1817. Byron : Manfred. Keats : Poems. Moore : Lalla Rookh.	1819. Lowell born.
1819. Irving : Sketch Book. Halleck and Drake : Croaker Poems.	1819. Byron : Don Juan (first part).	
1820-1830		
1820. Cooper : Precaution.	1820. Keats : Hyperion ; Eve of St. Agnes. Scott : Ivanhoe. Shelley : Prometheus Unbound. 1821. Scott : Kenilworth ; The Pirate.	1820. George IV King of England.
1821. Bryant : Poems. Cooper : Spy. Dana : The Idle Man. Percival : Poems.	1822. Lamb : Essays of Elia.	
1822. Irving : Bracebridge Hall. Neal : Logan, Seventy-Six. 1823. Cooper : Pioneers ; Pilot. Payne : Home, Sweet Home.		

AMERICAN LITERATURE	ENGLISH LITERATURE	BIOGRAPHICAL AND HISTORICAL EVENTS
<b>1820-1830</b>		
1824. Irving: Tales of a Traveler.		
1826. Cooper: Last of the Mohicans.		
1827. Cooper: Red Rover; Prairie.		1825. J. Q. Adams President.
Dana: Poems. Poe: Tamerlane and other Poems.		
Goodrich: Tales of Peter Parley about America.		
1828. Irving: Life and Voyages of Columbus.		
Hawthorne: Fanshawe.		
Hall: Letters from the West.		
1829. Irving: Conquest of Granada.		1829. Jackson President.
Poe: Al Aaraaf, Tamerlane, and Minor Poems.		

1830-1840	
<p>1830. Webster: Reply to Hayne.</p> <p>1831. Poe: Poems. Whittier: Legends of New England. Garrison established the Liberator.</p> <p>1832. Irving: Alhambra. Kennedy: Swallow Barn.</p> <p>1833. Longfellow: Outre-Mer.</p> <p>1834. Bancroft: History of the United States (Vol. I).</p> <p>1835. Kennedy: Horseshoe Robinson. Simms: Yemassee; Par-tisan.</p> <p>1836. Emerson: Nature. Holmes: Poems.</p> <p>1837. Hawthorne: Twice-Told Tales.</p>	<p>1830. Tennyson: Poems, Chiefly Lyrical.</p> <p>1830. William IV King of England.</p> <p>1832. Freneau died. Scott died.</p> <p>1833. Carlyle: Sartor Resartus. Tennyson: Poems.</p> <p>1834. Dickens: Sketches by Boz.</p> <p>1836. Dickens: Pickwick Papers.</p> <p>1837. Carlyle: French Revolution. Dickens: Oliver Twist. Thackeray: Yellowplush Papers.</p> <p>1837. Victoria Queen of England. Van Buren President.</p>

AMERICAN LITERATURE	ENGLISH LITERATURE	BIOGRAPHICAL AND HISTORICAL EVENTS
1839. Longfellow: Hyperion; Voices of the Night.	1830-1840	
1840. Cooper: Pathfinder. Dana: Two Years before the Mast. Poe: Tales of the Grotesque and the Arabesque.	1840-1850	
1841. Cooper: Deerslayer. Emerson: Essays. Longfellow: Ballads and other Poems.	1841. Browning: Pippa Passes. Carlyle: Hero-Worship.	1841. Harrison and Tyler Presidents.
1842. Longfellow: Poems on Slavery.	1843. Ruskin: Modern Painters (Vol. I).	
1844. Emerson: Essays (Second Series).		



<p>Margaret Fuller: Woman in the Nineteenth Century.</p> <p>1845. Poe: The Raven and other Poems.</p> <p>1846. Hawthorne: Mosses from an Old Manse.</p> <p>Melville: Typee.</p> <p>Taylor: Views Afoot.</p> <p>1847. Emerson: Poems.</p> <p>Longfellow: Evangeline.</p>	<p>1845. Polk President.</p>
<p>1848. Lowell: Biglow Papers; Fable for Critics; Vision of Sir Launfal.</p> <p>1849. Irving: Life of Goldsmith.</p> <p>Longfellow: Kavanagh.</p> <p>Parkman: Oregon Trail.</p> <p>Thoreau: Week on the Concord and Merrimac Rivers.</p> <p>Whittier: Voices of Freedom.</p> <p>Alice and Phœbe Cary: Poems.</p>	<p>1847. C. Brontë: Jane Eyre.</p> <p>Tennyson: The Princess.</p> <p>Thackeray: Vanity Fair.</p> <p>1848. Macaulay: History of England.</p> <p>1849. Dickens: David Copperfield.</p> <p>Thackeray: Pendennis.</p> <p>1849. Taylor President.</p> <p>Poe died.</p>

AMERICAN LITERATURE	ENGLISH LITERATURE	BIOGRAPHICAL AND HISTORICAL EVENTS
	<b>1850-1860</b>	
1850. Emerson: Representative Men. Hawthorne: Scarlet Letter. Mitchell: Reveries of a Bachelor.	1850. Tennyson: In Memoriam.	1850. Fillmore President. Wordsworth died. Tennyson poet laureate.
1851. Hawthorne: House of Seven Gables; Wonder-Book; Snow Image and other Twice Told Tales. Longfellow: Golden Legend.	1851. Ruskin: Stones of Venice. Mrs. Browning: Casa Guidi Windows.	1851. Cooper died.
Melville: Moby Dick. Curtis: Nile Notes of a Howadji. Mitchell: Dream Life. Curtis: Lotus-Eating. Hawthorne: Blithedale. Mrs. Stowe: Uncle Tom's Cabin.	1852. Thackeray: Henry Esmond.	

1853. Hawthorne: Tanglewood Tales.	1853. Pierce President.
1854. Curtis: Potiphar Papers. Thoreau: Walden. Taylor: Poems of the Orient.	
Cooke: Leather Stocking and Silk; Virginia Co-medians.	
1855. Longfellow: Hiawatha. Whitman: Leaves of Grass.	1855. Tennyson: Maud. Browning: Men and Women.
1856. Emerson: English Traits. Boker: Plays and Poems. Curtis: Prue and I. Aldrich: Ballad of Baby Bell.	1856. Mrs. Browning: Aurora Leigh.
1857. Atlantic Monthly founded.	
1858. Holmes: The Autocrat. Longfellow: Courtship of Miles Standish.	1858. Tennyson: Idylls of the King.
1859. Margaret Fuller: Life Without and Life Within. Mrs. Stowe: Minister's Wooing.	1857. Buchanan President.  1859. Irving died.  Dickens: Tale of Two Cities. George Eliot: Adam Bede. Meredith: Ordeal of Rich-ard Feverel.

AMERICAN LITERATURE	ENGLISH LITERATURE	BIOGRAPHICAL AND HISTORICAL EVENTS
	<b>1860-1870</b>	
1860. Emerson : Conduct of Life. Hawthorne : Marble Faun. Holmes : Professor at the Breakfast Table. Timrod : Poems.	1860. George Eliot : Mill on the Floss.	
1861. Holmes : Elsie Venner.	1861. George Eliot : Silas Marner.	1861. Lincoln President. Civil War begun.
1862. Browne : Artemus Ward : His Book.		
1863. Longfellow : Tales of a Wayside Inn.	1863. George Eliot : Romola.	1863. Emancipation Proclama- tion.
Hawthorne : Our Old Home.		Battle of Gettysburg. Thackeray died.
Whittier : In War Time.		
1864. Lowell : Fireside Travels.		1864. Hawthorne died.
1865. Lowell : Commemoration Ode.		1865. Lincoln Assassinated.
1866. Whittier : Snow-Bound. Howells : Venetian Life.	1866. Ruskin : Crown of Wild Olive.	End of Civil War.
1867. Emerson : May-Day and other Pieces.		

<p>Mark Twain: Celebrated Jumping Frog.  Harte: Condensed Novels.  Holmes: Guardian Angel.  Lowell: Biglow Papers (Second Series).  Whittier: Tent on the Beach.</p> <p>1868. Miss Alcott: Little Women.  Hale: Man without a Country.  Aldrich: Story of a Bad Boy.  Mark Twain: Innocents Abroad.  Lowell: Under the Willows.  Mrs. Stowe: Oldtown Folks.</p>	<p>1868. Browning: The Ring and the Book.  Morris: Earthly Paradise.  1869. Arnold: Culture and Anarchy.  Blackmore: Lorna Doone.</p>	<p>1869. Grant President.</p>
— 1870-1880 —		
<p>1870. Lowell: Among my Books.  Harte: Luck of Roaring Camp.</p>	<p>1870. Rossetti: Poems.</p>	<p>1870. Dickens died.</p>

AMERICAN LITERATURE	ENGLISH LITERATURE	BIOGRAPHICAL AND HISTORICAL EVENTS
<b>1870-1880</b>		
<p>1870. Taylor: Translation of Faust. Bryant: Translation of the Iliad.</p>		
<p>1871. Miss Alcott: Little Men. Eggleston: Hoosier School-master. Hay: Pike County Bal-lads; Castilian Days. Howells: Their Wedding Journey. Longfellow: Divine Trag-edy. Lowell: My Study Win-dows.</p>	<p>1871. Darwin: Descent of Man. George Eliot: Middle-march.</p>	
<p>1872. Miller: Songs of the Sierras. Mark Twain: Roughing It. Fields: Yesterdays with Authors. Holmes: Poet at the Breakfast Table.</p>		

<p>1873. Aldrich : Marjorie Daw.          1874. Eggleston : Circuit Rider.          Howells : Forgone Conclusion.</p>	<p>1875. Meredith : Beauchamp's Career.</p>	<p>1875. Meredith : Beauchamp's Career.</p>
<p>1875. Harte : Tales of the Argonauts.          James : Passionate Pilgrim ; Roderick Hudson.          Longfellow : Masque of Pandora.          Mark Twain : Tom Sawyer.          Lanier : Poems.</p>		
<p>1876. James : The American.          Miss Jewett : Deephaven.          Burroughs : Birds and Poets.</p>		<p>1877. Hayes President.</p>
<p>1878. James : The Europeans ; Daisy Miller.          Longfellow : Keramos.</p>		<p>1878. Bryant died.</p>
<p>1879. James : International Epitode.          Howells : Lady of the Aroostook.          Stockton : Rudder Grange.          Cable : Old Creole Days.</p>	<p>1879. Meredith : Egoist.</p>	

AMERICAN LITERATURE	ENGLISH LITERATURE	BIOGRAPHICAL AND HISTORICAL EVENTS
	1870-1880	
1879. Burroughs: <i>Locusts and Wild Honey.</i> Ryan: <i>Poems.</i>		
	1880-1890	
1880. Harris: <i>Uncle Remus.</i> Mark Twain: <i>Tramp Abroad.</i> Lanier: <i>Science of English Verse.</i> Wallace: <i>Ben-Hur.</i>		
1881. Helen Hunt Jackson: <i>Century of Dishonor.</i> James: <i>Portrait of a Lady.</i>	1881. Stevenson: <i>Virginibus Puerisque.</i>	1881. Garfield, Arthur, Presidents. Lanier died.
1882. Whitman: <i>Specimen Days.</i> Mark Twain: <i>Prince and the Pauper.</i> Howells: <i>Modern Instance.</i> Emma Lazarus: <i>Songs of a Semite.</i> Longfellow: <i>In the Harbor.</i>		1882. Longfellow, Emerson, died.



1883. Mark Twain : Life on the Mississippi.	1883. Stevenson : Treasure Island.
1884. Bunner : Airs from Arcady. Cable : Doctor Sevier. Mark Twain : Huckleberry Finn. Stockton : The Lady; or the Tiger ? Miss Jewett : Country Doctor. Helen Hunt Jackson : Ramona.	
1885. Holmes : Mortal Antipathy. Howells : Rise of Silas Lapham. Stedman : Poets of America.	1885. Meredith : Diana of the Crossways.
1887. Crawford : Saracinesca. Page : In Ole Virginia.	1886. Stevenson : Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde.
1888. Deland : John Ward, Preacher. Lowell : Political Essays.	1888. Mrs. Ward : Robert Elsmere. Kipling : Plain Tales from the Hills.

AMERICAN LITERATURE	ENGLISH LITERATURE	BIOGRAPHICAL AND HISTORICAL EVENTS
<p>1889. Mark Twain: Connecticut Yankee at King Arthur's Court. Howells: Hazard of New Fortunes. Crawford: Sant' Ilario.</p>	<p>1880-1890</p>	<p>1889. Harrison President. Browning died.</p>
<p>1890. Bunner: Short Sixes. Crawford: Cigarette-Maker's Romance. Holmes: Over the Tea-Cups. Field: Little Book of Western Verse; Little Book of Profitable Tales. 1891. Bunner: Zadoc Pine. Curtis: From the Easy-Chair. (First Series.)</p>	<p>1890-1900</p> <p>1891. Barrie: Little Minister. Hardy: Tess of the D'Urbervilles.</p>	<p>1891. Lowell died.</p>

Garland: Main Traveled Roads.	
Allen: Flute and Violin.	
Mary E. Wilkins: A New England Nun.	
1892. Crawford: Don Orsino. James: Lesson of the Master.	1892. Whittier died. Whitman died. Tennyson died.
Parkman: Half-Century of Conflict.	
1893. Aldrich: Two Bites at a Cherry.	1893. Cleveland President.
Mark Twain: The £1,000,000 Bank-Note.	
1894. Mark Twain: Pudd'n-head Wilson.	1894. Holmes died.
	1895. Field died.
1896. Mark Twain: Joan of Arc.	
1898. Page: Red Rock. Wiggins: Penelope's Progress.	1896. Mrs. Stowe died. 1897. McKinley President.
	1895. Wells: The Time Machine. Meredith: The Amazing Marriage. Hardy: Jude the Obscure.
	1894. Kipling: Jungle Book.
	1898. Shaw: Plays Pleasant and Unpleasant.

AMERICAN LITERATURE	ENGLISH LITERATURE	BIOGRAPHICAL AND HISTORICAL EVENTS
1898. Higginson: Cheerful Yesterdays. Dunne: Mr. Dooley in Peace and War. 1899. Churchill: Richard Carvel. Ford: Janice Meredith.	1890-1900	
1901. Churchill: The Crisis.  1903. James: The Better Sort. Mrs. Wilkins Freeman: The Wind in the Rose-Bush. Crothers: The Gentle Reader. 1905. Wharton: The House of Mirth.	1900-1913  1901. Kipling: Kim.  1903. Shaw: Man and Superman.	1901. Edward VII King of England. Roosevelt President. 1902. Harte, Stockton, died.

<p>Miss Replier: In our Convent Days. 1906. Moody: The Great Divide. 1907. Howells: Between the Dark and the Daylight.</p>	<p>1908. Wells: The War in the Air.</p>	<p>1907. Aldrich died.</p>
<p>1910. Chesterton: What's Wrong with the World? Bennett: Clayhanger.</p>	<p>1908. Harris, Stedman, D. G. Mitchell, died. 1909. Taft President. Crawford, Miss Jewett, Hale, died. 1910. Mark Twain, Moody, died. George V King of England.</p>	<p>1911. Higginson died. 1913. Wilson President. Bridges poet laureate.</p>
<p>1913. Moody: Complete Poems.</p>		



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